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THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL

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THE BOOK OF JOB

GEORGE A. BARTON

THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL

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COMMENTARY

ON

THE BOOK OF JOB

BY

GEORGE A. BARTON, PH.D.

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE AND SEMITIC
LANGUAGES IN BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

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To

MY HONORED TEACHER

CRAWFORD HOWELL TOY

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Bible for Home and School is intended to place the results of the best modern biblical scholarship at the disposal of the general reader. It does not seek to duplicate other commentaries to which the student must turn. Its chief characteristics are (*a*) its rigid exclusion of all *processes*, both critical and exegetical, from its notes; (*b*) its presupposition and its use of the assured results of historical investigation and criticism wherever such results throw light on the biblical text; (*c*) its running analysis both in text and comment; (*d*) its brief explanatory notes adapted to the rapid reader; (*e*) its thorough but brief Introductions; (*f*) its use of the Revised Version of 1881, supplemented with all important renderings in other versions.

Biblical science has progressed rapidly during the past few years, but the reader still lacks a brief, comprehensive commentary that shall extend to him in usable form material now at the disposition of the student. It is hoped that in this series the needs of intelligent Sunday School teachers have been met, as well as those of clergymen and lay readers, and that in scope, purpose, and loyalty to the Scriptures as a foundation of Christian thought and life, its volumes will stimulate the intelligent use of the Bible in the home and the school.

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THE BOOK OF JOB

GEORGE A. BARTON

INTRODUCTION

The book of Job belongs to the "Wisdom" literature of the Hebrews. Other books belonging to this class of writings are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, among canonical books; Ecclesiasticus (or the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach) and the Wisdom of Solomon, among Old Testament Apocrypha. Of all these books Job is the greatest both in religious depth and in literary power. The "Wisdom" literature was produced by Israel's sages. In their way they made a contribution to Israel's religious thought as important as that of priests or prophets.

General Analysis of the Book

As the text of the Book of Job stands it falls into the following divisions:

1. The Prologue; chs. 1, 2. This is in prose.
2. Job's Wail of Despair; ch. 3.
3. The great Debate between Job and his Friends on Suffering; chs. 4–31. Chs. 3–31 are in poetry.
4. The Elihu Speeches. Chs. 32–37. Of these 32: 1–6a are in prose and the rest in poetry.
5. Jehovah's Address and the final Colloquy between Jehovah and Job; 38: 1–42: 6, in poetry.
6. The Epilogue; 42: 7–17, in prose.

The Story of Job and the Poem by Different Authors

It requires no very profound study of Job to convince one that the prologue and epilogue are not the work of the poet who wrote the bulk of the book, but that they belong to an old folk tale which he found already in circulation and which he selected to form the plot of his poem. The reasons for this conclusion are: (1) The prologue and epilogue are in prose, while the body of the work is in poetry. (2) In the prologue and epilogue the divine name used is Jehovah, while in the rest of the work it is El, Eloah, and Shaddai, as if Jehovah had been purposely avoided. Once or twice only the author has used Jehovah, apparently by slip of memory. (3) The Job of the prologue differs fundamentally from the Job of the poem. He is patient, submissive, and resigned; the latter is impatient, bitter, and defiant. (4) The words attributed to Jehovah in 42:7 are incompatible with the present discussion which precedes them. They imply that Eliphaz and his friends had spoken in the strain of Job's wife in 2:9 and that Job had maintained throughout the attitude described in 1:21 and 2:10. (5) The discussion of the poem moves in the realm of spiritual religion and ethical endeavor only. Even Job's friends, who represent the orthodox theology of the day, never suggest that Job should offer sacrifices to atone for his sins; Job in the moment of his repentance never thinks of such a thing. Right doing and a right attitude of soul toward God are in the poem all that is necessary for reconciliation to God. This is the point of view of the great prophets and of the greatest psalmists, such as the authors of Psalms 50 and 51. The prologue and epilogue, on the other hand, represent the old popular, unspiritual ritualistic side of religion in which animal sacrifices formed a prominent feature. (6) The epilogue rewards Job with a double measure of earthly blessings, implying that such blessings are the ultimate rewards of virtue — a doctrine which the poem has vigorously combated. We conclude, therefore, that the prologue and epilogue belonged to an old folk tale and that there once stood between them a description of Job's demeanor under suffering different from that which we now find there — a description which also portrayed the three friends in a different way.

Some confirmation of this view exists in outside sources. Ezekiel 14 : 14 quotes Job, as he does Noah and Daniel (probably Enoch originally stood where Daniel now stands), as examples of men who had been righteous and exemplary under trial. The Job of our poem was certainly not always exemplary, and it is most probable that Ezekiel knew a different form of the story. The author of the Epistle of James (Jas. 5 : 11), says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job." The Job of our poem was anything but patient, and it is probable that the New Testament writer had in mind the same form of the story as Ezekiel. Theodore of Mopsuestia, who died about 428 A.D., bears witness (cf. Migne, LXVI, cols. 697, 698) to the existence in his time of a story of Job as a holy and great prophet, and Theodore charges the author of Job with having taken undue liberties with the story. Mohammed in the Coran (Suras 21 : 83, 84 and 38 : 40–44) alludes to Job as to a holy man who was especially favored by God — apparently having in mind this story; and a long Arabic story about Job in Ath-Thalabi's (died 1035, 1036) *Stories of the Prophets* exhibits a curious blending of strands from this old popular story and our canonical Job. A translation by Professor Macdonald of this story may be found in the *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, XIV, 145–161. The conclusion reached by a study of the internal evidence is thus confirmed by external testimony. This story the poet took and, substituting his own poetic and powerful treatment of the problem of suffering for the older picture, gave us the work which we now have.

THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE STORY OF THE PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE

In the library of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria from 668 to 626 B.C., a text has been preserved of a story strikingly parallel to the story of Job. It was, as the colophon to the tablet tells us, the second tablet of a series entitled

"I will praise the lord of wisdom." Like our book of Job, it belonged, therefore, to a "wisdom" literature. It is clearly a copy of a story older than the time of Assurbanipal, for part of an older list of kings also found in his library constitutes a commentary upon a part of it.

According to this story, a high official or king, of the Babylonian city of Nippur, named Ṭâbi-utul-Bel (a man whose date and place in history are as yet unknown to us), had been very god-fearing and prosperous, but was smitten, as though he had been a wicked man, with a terrible disease, which all the priests and magicians were unable to assuage. This disaster occurred after he had passed the allotted time of life. The poem describes the sufferings very vividly. Ṭâbi-utul-Bel says:

"An evil demon has taken hold upon me (?);
From yellowish the sickness became white,
It threw me on the ground and stretched me on my back,
It bent my high stature like a poplar."
* * * * * * *
"A strap of many twists held me fast,
A sharply pointed spear pierced me."
* * * * * * *
"I was saturated like a sheep in my excrements."

Like Job the sufferer found in his affliction a testing of the ways of his god, for he declares:

"The plan of a god is full of mystery (?) — who can understand it?"

If the reader will compare with these extracts the passages from Job collected in the note on 2 : 7, he will find the likeness very striking.

The tablets are unfortunately broken. A fragmentary text at Constantinople, recently published by R. Campbell Thompson in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, Vol. XXXII (1910), pp. 18–24, contained the turning-point of the story. Unhappily the text of this is much broken, but it would seem from what can be made out that the fortunes of Ṭâbi-utul-Bel were restored, not because he maintained an ideal attitude towards his god, but because he found at last a messenger who laid his case before Bel and succeeded in moving that god to drive away the demons who were tormenting the royal sufferer. If this is the case, the parallel to Job is not so close as at first sight appears. The Babylonian story represents an earlier phase of thought, when the proper form of magical intercession with the gods was more prominent than the ethical and religious attitude of the worshipper.[1]

Has this Babylonian story any connection with the story of Job? In reply, it must be said that it has no literary connection with it. The name of the royal sufferer was not only quite different from the name of Job, but the name of his city Nippur was entirely lost. Moreover, in the earliest form of the story which we can trace, Job was not a king. The story of Job probably came to the Hebrews from a foreign source, for the name Job has no etymology in Hebrew; but it came orally and was attached to Hebrew localities and given a Palestinian setting. Stories travel thus in all parts of the world. Old Harvard students tell of the late Professor Andrew P. Peabody the same stories which were formerly told in Germany of Professor Neander. So the story of Job came into Palestine possibly from Babylonia and found a habitation in Bashan.

Modern explorers in the country to the east of the Sea of Galilee find the name Uz to the south of the modern Nawâ and to the northeast of Tell Ashtara, the site of the Ashtoreth Karnaim of Genesis 14: 5. A number of neighboring places have been named for Job (see note on 1: 1). In this region, too, within a day's journey, or at the most two days' journey, are the villages of Tema and Naemeh, the cities with which the story probably connected Eliphaz the Temanite and Zophar the Naamathite, while another village, Es-Suweda, may be the Shuhu from which it was originally supposed that Bildad came. If the story settled here, as we suppose, it may well have been attached to some man of Uz who had been overtaken by misfortune. Friends of such a good man may well have heard of his misfortune and have come (or have been supposed to come) from these villages to comfort him. As the story circulated and became popular there was an inevitable tendency to magnify Job and his friends and to enlarge the theatre of the tale. In the form in which the story is presented in our book Tema has been identified with the more famous Teman in Edom; the original of Shuhu, with the country Shuhu on the distant Euphrates; while the "raiders" of the original reading of 1 : 15 and the "horsemen" of 1 : 17 have by slight textual changes become respectively the Sabæans and Chaldæans — two great and distant powers (see the notes on those verses).

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[1] See Jastrow's article on the poem with copious translations in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XXV, 135–191. Translations of it into German are found in Jastrow's *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, II, 120–133, and in Zimmern's *Babylonische Hymnen und Gebete*, Leipsic, 1905, pp. 28–30, also in Weber's *Literatur der Babylonier und Assyrer*, 135–137, R. C. Thompson, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, XXXII, 18–24, and M. F. Martin, *Journal Asiatique*, July–August, 1910, pp. 75–143.

This tendency to magnify the actors in the story went still farther after our poet had utilized it for the background of his immortal work. The addition to 42 : 17 found in the Arabic version places Uz itself on the borders of Edom and Arabia and makes Job a king of Edom, and Eliphaz, king of the Temanites; while the expansion of this now found in the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions has made Bildad the Tyrant of the Shuhites, and Zophar, king of the Minæans in South Arabia (see note on 42 : 17). This tendency is carried still farther in the Testament of Job, a still later work. Here Job is represented as a king who tells at great length of all the measures of truly royal munificence which he adopted to make his great wealth a benefit to the poor. In this work, too, the friends are kings who come with their splendid body-guards to visit an afflicted monarch. (See M. R. James, *Apocryph Anecdota*, Cambridge, 1897, pp. 104–137; and *Jewish Encyclopedia*, VII, 200 ff.)

Thus at the end of the development caused by the tendency to glorify Job the simple villagers of these trans-Jordanic hamlets figure in the popular imagination as monarchs surrounded with royal splendor; and the sufferer, as in the Babylonian poem, is a monarch.

The form in which our book presents the story exhibits it in an intermediate stage of development between its humble Palestinian beginnings and its final form.

THE PROBLEM OF THE POEM AND ITS TREATMENT

The problem of the Book of Job is the problem of suffering — why do good men suffer? The problem is in part a theological problem and in part a religious one. This is true of it in any period of the world's thought, but it was peculiarly true of it in the time of our poet. The prevailing theology of that time taught that God rewarded good men with health, wealth, and happiness in this life. During his days of prosperity this theory of life had seemed to Job adequate. Suddenly, when conscious of no sin, his possessions were swept away from him, he was robbed of his children, and was himself subjected to acute bodily suffering. In the prologue, which the writer adapted from the old folk tale, the reader is admitted to the secret of the suffering, and is told that God permitted it in order to reclaim Satan, an angel who was disgruntled and had become skeptical as to the existence of disinterested virtue. All this was, however, hidden from Job. His suffering accordingly plunged him into the deepest perplexity; it proved his theology false and raised in its acutest form the whole question of his personal relation to God.

While Job was suffering and pondering the problems thus raised, not calmly, but with the disordered nerves and turbulent feelings which accompany a terrible disease, his friends came and sat down beside him. Their theory of suffering was the one which up to that time Job had held. They could not look upon him without deep and genuine sympathy, but it was equally impossible for them to look upon him without feeling that he must have been a terrible sinner — that his whole life, which appeared to be so righteous, was after all a horrible sham. Their sympathy was accordingly tempered by cold condemnation. Job felt it through their silence, and it added to his agony. At last silence became unbearable, and he vented his feelings in the wild ravings of despair which form ch. 3.

Job's wild utterances seemed to his friends blasphemous, but at first they regarded them as the ravings of an irresponsible, though sinful, sufferer and treated him gently. As, however, Job reiterated his positions and charged God with using his unlimited power to torture an insignificant creature, their patience gave way; they spoke more and more harshly, finally directly charging Job with common sins. In the original form of the poem each of the three friends was given three speeches (see below, p. 32 ff). In the first cycle of speeches the friends dwell on the nature of God, Eliphaz setting forth his transcendent purity, Bildad his inflexible righteousness, and Zophar his inscrutable wisdom. In the second cycle they paint lurid pictures of the fate of the wicked — his life is spent in torments, he suffers a miserable death, his posterity perish. In the third cycle Eliphaz directly charges Job with flagrant sin, while Bildad and Zophar drive the charge home by portraying as in the second cycle the terrible fate of the sinner.

Job, on his part, while represented as speaking at times in strains of marvellous beauty and vigor, repels the insinuations and charges of his friends, and mingles charges against God that are almost blasphemous with expressions of touching yearning and of sublime faith. Finally, in chs. 29–31, Job repels the last of the charges made against him by his friends, and then centres his thought upon a desire, which he had several times expressed before (13 : 22; 14 : 15; 23 : 3–10), to come face to face with God. God at last grants this desire, and by the vision of the

Eternal (38:1–42:6) Job is satisfied and repents. His problem was solved by a new personal adjustment to God.

In treating the problem thus the poet set forth various truths, the most important of which will be mentioned below. One of the results of his treatment was to disprove the theology that was then current, according to which it was taught that God punishes the wicked with worldly adversity and rewards the righteous with worldly prosperity. It is true that he permits the three friends of Job to say in the poem all that could be said for this point of view, but he portrays in the character and puts into the mouth of Job arguments on the other side so strong, and at the same time pictures Job as finding his satisfaction in a way so different, that to all who had ears to hear his work must have exploded this theological notion.

Portrayal of the Growth of a Soul in Suffering

As a part of his treatment of the problem the poet has graphically portrayed the growth of a soul in suffering. This growth he has exhibited in three particulars: (1) the soul's faith in God; (2) faith in a future life; and (3) the discovery of the healing power of present communion with God. A word concerning each of these points is necessary.

1. The growth of Job's faith in God is set forth with great artistic power. At first suffering had robbed Job of all faith in God's goodness. In 7:12–21 he bitterly complains that the great "Watcher" of men is relentlessly and uselessly torturing him; in 9:21, 22, where he recklessly takes his destiny in his hands and declares his integrity in the expectation that God will destroy him for it, he declares that God "destroys the perfect and the wicked" alike. In these passages all faith in God's goodness is gone.

In 13:15, 16 he is repeating this thought in stronger language:

> "Behold he will slay me; I may not hope,
> But my ways to his face I will maintain,"

when in spite of himself the conviction of God's essential justice bursts in upon him and he continues:

> "This also shall be my salvation;
> For a godless man shall not come before him."

This new conviction that God is really good did not at once drive out all other thoughts. In all men the best conceptions have to struggle for a foothold. We accordingly find Job in 16:12–18 again making a bitter complaint of the way God had delivered him to misfortune to destroy him; but even while he is saying it the newborn conviction of God's goodness returns with increased power, and he declares:

> "Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven,
> And he that voucheth for me is on high."

The soul cannot get away from the fact that God is really a moral being, and that even when the circumstances of life make it appear otherwise, there is no refuge from God but God.

Once more this conviction manifests itself in 19:25. Job had just been dwelling upon the imminence and the inevitableness of his dissolution, but once more declares his faith in the moral character and unshakable justice of God by saying:

> "But I know that my Vindicator liveth,
> And he shall arise as a last ONE over the dust."

God is the Vindicator and he is the last One because his word shall be final. Thus the sufferer, who began in a strain of blasphemy, ends in a strain of confident faith.

2. Parallel with the development just sketched there runs a growing faith in a future life. His suffering had made him long to come face to face with God that he might be vindicated (13:22); this longing had in 14:14 taken the form of a wish that, if a man die, he might live again. Finally faith in the moral nature of God —

a faith to which he had been driven even in the midst of the rebellious feelings caused by his sufferings — led him in 19:26, 27 to the conviction that, though his flesh should perish, yet apart from his flesh he should see God.

Some scholars object to this conclusion, partly because they believe the text to be insecure, and partly because they consider such a belief an anachronism. The versions, however, support the text at this point with much unanimity, so that suspicion of the text cannot rightly be based on external evidence. While it is true that a view of a life after death thus spiritually conceived does not appear in other Jewish writings for a long time, and while it is true that later Psalmists protested against any faith in a life after death at all (see Ps. 88:12 and 115:17), it is perfectly possible that a great genius such as our poet was, as he sought for an adequate theodicy, should have let his thought take this great flight of faith.

3. But along with this the poet portrays the discovery of the healing power of present communion with God. Job had at first longed to come face to face with God as with an opponent in a lawsuit (13:22); then he had conceived it as resulting in some sort of communion (14:15); but despairing of living till he could come face to face with God, he had reached the conviction that after death he should come face to face with God and be vindicated (19:25–27). This was apparently not an unwavering conviction. Reached in a moment of exaltation, it wavered as the currents of feeling, which in illness are unusually unstable, ebbed again. In his final appeal to God Job's tender mood has passed and he appeals that his great Adversary shall answer him, declaring that he would go into the Divine Presence proudly wearing his indictment upon his shoulder. Then God appeared and answered Job. The majestic Presence of God affected the springs of Job's feelings in ways that he had not anticipated. He found repentance springing up in his breast (42:4–6); and his words of submission indicate that he

had made the unexpected discovery that the solution of life's sufferings and paradoxes is to be found in present communion with God.

THE POET'S SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

Many interpreters have complained that he presented no solution. They have charged him with raising a profound problem, discussing it with relentless logic, and then leaving it unsolved. Duhm (*Hiob.* 180 ff.) and Peake (*Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, 100, and *Job*, pp. 18, 19, 343) have with better insight pointed out the solution that the poet really offers. With a touch too artistic to permit him to descend to a homiletic attitude the poet has shown that his solution of life's problem is a religious one. He had portrayed with great power the inability of man's mind to comprehend the universe or to understand why man must suffer, but he makes Job, his hero, find in a vision of God the secret of life. Job's questions remain unanswered, but now that he knows God he is content to let them remain unanswered. He cannot solve life's riddle, but is content to trust God, of whose goodness he is convinced, and who, Job is sure, knows the answer.

The poet has thus taught that it is in the realm of religion and not in that of the intellect that the solution of life's mysteries is to be found.

In presenting this solution he portrays at once the function of the intellect in religion and its limitations. He shows that it is the function of the intellect to keep theology in touch with facts, and compel the abandonment of dogmas which have ceased to be satisfactory explanations of experience and are thus seen to be false. On the other hand he pictures with equal clearness the inability of the mind to fathom life and the universe, and shows that here the one way to peace and strength is in a personal experience of God, which begets faith and trust. One goes on then with a happy heart, not because life's problems are solved, but because he lives in the companionship of One who knows the solution.

THE TEXT OF JOB

The Hebrew text of the book of Job has been transmitted to us through MSS., something more than two hundred of which have been in whole or in part collated for modern critical editions of the book. These MSS. are all later than the year 1000 A.D., and the text which they contain presents few variations of importance. Those few are, however, valuable. On the whole it is evident that the text suffered many corruptions in transmission before the earliest extant Hebrew MSS. were written. This corruption arose from many causes. Letters were accidentally transposed and one group of letters was sometimes mistaken for another group. As the Hebrews then wrote the consonants of words only, a different set of vowels from those originally intended might be supplied to a word or group of words and give a different meaning from that originally expressed. If a scribe wrote from dictation, defective hearing might lead to changes in the text.

In addition to accidents of this sort, others arising from the nature of the subject-matter undoubtedly came in. The fine poetry of the book was sometimes misunderstood by prosaically minded scribes, and its bold criticisms of the Divine government of the world were certainly objectionable to them. Deliberate changes were made to soften such things down. It has come about from such causes as these that the text of the book of Job is corrupt, perhaps more so than that of any other Old Testament book. It is in this respect in striking contrast to the text of the book of Ecclesiastes (cf. Barton, *Ecclesiastes*, in the *International Critical Commentary*, pp. 17, 18).

As aids to the correction of the corruptions of the Hebrew text we have eleven versions, which are older than our Hebrew MSS. They are as follows:

1. *The Greek Version*, which is commonly called the Septuagint, was made at a date which cannot now be determined with accuracy. It is, however, safe to say, with Schürer (*Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes in Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, vierte Auf., Leipsic, 1909, Band III, p. 426 f.), that it was not later than the first half of the first century B.C. This version is preserved for us in two MSS. of the fourth century A.D. and two of the fifth century, not to mention later MSS., and comes to us accordingly in copies from six to seven hundred years earlier than our earliest Hebrew MSS. of the book. The Septuagint is, accordingly, a most important instrument for the correction of the Hebrew text. Origen (185–254 A.D.) tells us that the Septuagint version of Job known to him was about one-sixth shorter than our present text, and that he supplied the passages which it omitted from the version of Theodotion, marking with a certain asterisk the passages so supplied. These marks have been preserved in certain MSS. (see *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, Vol. XXVII, p. 127 ff.), and the passages are still lacking in the Sahidic version, so that it can still be ascertained what they were. In some cases they undoubtedly represent passages which the Greek translators considered difficult or corrupt, but in some cases they represent additions to the book made at least later than the Hebrew exemplar from which the Septuagint translation was made. For proof, see below, under *Integrity of Job*.

2. *The Version of Aquila*. Because the Septuagint version had become so popular among Christians, Aquila, a Jewish proselyte, made another and much more literal translation into Greek in the second century A.D. Said to have been related by marriage to the emperor Hadrian (117–138 A.D.), Aquila became a convert to Christianity, but, refusing to give up the practice of magic, he was ex-

communicated and joined the Jews in disgust. His translation was made before 177 A.D., for it was known to Irenæus. Aquila's version was made under the patronage of leaders of the Jewish synagogue, its literalness commended it to them, and it attained a considerable popularity among the Jews. It contained the passages which the Septuagint omitted.

3. *Version of Theodotion.* Theodotion, said by Irenæus to have been a Jewish proselyte, appears to have lived at Ephesus, where he made his translation of the Old Testament into Greek before the end of the second century A.D. Swete says of him: "he seems to have produced a free revision of the Septuagint rather than an independent version." Probably his version was made because Aquila's was too literal to be pleasing to those who knew Greek well. Like Aquila's, his version contains the portions of Job which the Septuagint omitted.

4. *The Version of Symmachus.* Symmachus, a man apparently of Jewish or Samaritan parentage, who, probably, became an Ebionite Christian, made a fourth translation of the Old Testament into Greek at the end of the second or beginning of the third century. His version was known to Origen in the year 228 A.D., and consequently cannot have been made later than the first quarter of the third century. The earlier Greek versions were, it is thought, known to him. His aim was to catch the meaning of the Hebrew and to express it in elegant Greek.

5. *The Old Latin Version.* The Old Testament was translated into Latin for the use of the Latin-speaking Christians of North Africa as early, probably, as the second century. This version, so far as the book of Job is concerned, is with the exception of a few fragmentary portions which exist in MS. form, known to us only in the quotations of Cyprian (who died 258 A.D.) and other Latin Fathers. This translation, so far as we can obtain it for Job, agrees closely with the Septuagint. It is clearly dependent on that version, rarely exhibiting independent influence of the Hebrew.

6. *The Latin Vulgate.* The basis of this version was made by St. Jerome between 383 and 420 A.D. He translated from the Hebrew text, but had full knowledge of the Greek versions and also the benefit of knowledge gained from the Jewish teachers of whom he learned Hebrew. His version is often independent of all others, therefore, but in a number of cases in Job it agrees with the Targum, showing that the Jewish information to which Jerome had access was identical with that which formed the Targum.

7. *The Sahidic Version.* The Old Testament was, it is believed, translated into the Egyptian dialects during the second century. The translation into Sahidic, the dialect of Upper Egypt, was published by Ciasca, 1885–1889, under the title *Sacrorum Bibliorum Fragmenta Copto-Sahidica Musei Borgiana.* With the exception of one or two small lacunæ where the MS. was fragmentary, it contains the whole of the book of Job. The translation into Sahidic was made from the Septuagint version before that version had been enlarged by Origen; it is, accordingly, a very important witness to the readings of the original Septuagint.

8. *The Ethiopic Version.* Abyssinia was evangelized during the fourth century, when (or soon after) the Scriptures were translated into Ethiopic. The Ethiopic text of the book of Job was edited from 23 MSS. by F. M. E. Pereira in Firman-Didot's *Patrologia Orientalia,* Tom. II, Paris, 1905, pp. 565–688. This version is as clearly based upon the Septuagint as the Sahidic version is, but there is this difference: the Septuagint from which the Ethiopic translation was made was the Septuagint which Origen expanded from the text of Theodotion. The Ethiopic version is accordingly chiefly valuable as a witness to the Septuagint text of Job after the time of Origen.

9. *The Syriac Version.* The origin of this version is as obscure as when Theodore of Mopsuestia declared that no one knew who made it. It was, perhaps, made in the

second century and probably not later than the third. While in some of the books of the Old Testament this version was clearly influenced by the Septuagint translation, that is not the case with the book of Job. In Job the Syriac was clearly obtained by translating directly from the Hebrew text, and the translators had before them a text which often differed from our present Hebrew MSS; the version is, therefore, a valuable instrument for the correction of the present text.

10. *The Targum.* The Targumim are Jewish translations or paraphrases of Jewish books in the Aramaic language. The Targum of Job is a real translation of the book. It was made, so Bacher (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII, p. 62) concludes, before the fall of Rome in 476 A.D. The phenomena which he adduces point to a date between 395 and 476. The Targum of Job contains more variations from the Hebrew text than the Targumim of Old Testament books usually do. It is, therefore, of considerable importance in determining the original readings.

11. *The Arabic Version.* The Arabic version, made by Saadia Gaon, who died in 942 A.D., closely follows in Job the Syriac version in most of its readings, though it occasionally betrays a trace of direct Hebrew influence.

These versions have been compared by the writer and their important variations from the Hebrew text are given along with the marginal readings of the Revised Version. From what has been said above, as well as from a comparison of the readings cited below, it is evident that, as in the case of New Testament MSS., these versions in part fall into groups. The members of these groups generally appear together in support of the same readings. The two most striking groups are (1) that composed of the Septuagint, Old Latin, Sahidic, and Ethiopic, (2) that composed of the Syriac and Arabic, while far less often (3) the Vulgate and Targum stand together.

Important as the versions are, they cannot be followed blindly. Their translators sometimes had a text which was as corrupt as our Hebrew. It is clear in numerous instances that they misunderstood the Hebrew which lay before them, and at times it would appear that they endeavored by violent methods to force a meaning out of a text that had become unintelligible. But after allowance has been made for these drawbacks, there remains a large residuum of cases in which it is clear that the versions in contrast to the Hebrew text have preserved the true reading.

After all the help which these versions give us, however, it is clear to the careful student that some passages remain hopelessly corrupt. It is certain that a poet of the ability of the author of Job would express thoughts that are intelligible, clear, and poetical. There are in Job a number of passages, probably greater than one will find in any other book of the Old Testament, in which neither the reading of the Hebrew nor of any of the versions affords a thought that is intelligible and clear. Our textual material for Job is too scanty to make the textual criticism of the book anything like the exact science that the textual criticism of the New Testament is. All that the interpreter can do in such cases is to fall back upon conjectural emendations. These emendations are clearly hypothetical; they are not, perhaps, in most cases what the poet actually wrote; but if they present an idea that is intelligible, clear, and poetical, they are more likely to be correct than the readings which do not present such an idea. The present writer holds conservative views as to the freedom that should be accorded to conjectural emendation. It is his conviction that, if an ancient text affords a possible meaning, it should be given preference over a modern guess. He has, nevertheless, in the pages that follow been compelled to recommend the student in a considerable number of cases to adopt a modern conjecture as the best that can be done at present toward ascertaining the poet's original expression.

THE INTEGRITY OF THE BOOK

It will conduce to clearness to consider this subject under the following topics: (1) the omissions of the Septuagint version; (2) the Elihu speeches; (3) other interpolations; (4) editorial changes in genuine portions of the book.

1. *The Omissions of the Septuagint Version.* The Septuagint version, as already noted, omitted, so Origen states, about one-sixth of the text of Job. The late Professors Hatch of Oxford and Bickell of Vienna held that none of the material which the Septuagint omitted belonged to the original text of the poem. The views of Hatch, published in his *Essays in Biblical Greek*, Oxford, 1889, are more consistently carried out than those of Bickell, which were published in various numbers of *Wiener Zeitschrift, für die Kunde des Morganlandes*, for 1892, and in his book, *Das Buch Job nach Anleitung der Strophik und der Septuaginta*, Wien, 1894. Bickell omits quite as many verses because they do not conform to his theory of the metre as he does because they are lacking in the Septuagint. The views of Hatch were subjected to a thorough examination by the late Professor Dillmann of Berlin, in an article published in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Berlin Academy for 1890, Band II, pp. 1345 ff. Dillmann went to the other extreme, holding that the omissions of the Septuagint were made deliberately. The problem has been recently examined by Dr. H. H. Nichols in the *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 126 ff., who rightly holds that, while the Septuagint cannot be thoughtlessly followed in all its omissions, it does in some important cases point to real interpolations.

A careful study of the subject indicates that the Septuagint translator was wont to omit what appeared to him to be repetitions in altered form. Sometimes this led him to omit a mere phrase; sometimes, the second member of a parallelism; sometimes, a verse or more which for emphasis restates the thought in altered form; sometimes, quotations from other parts of the poem; and sometimes, difficult passages. When once this tendency on the part of the translator is recognized, the necessity of regarding with suspicion every line or verse which this version omits is removed. There remain, however, some longer omissions which ought to be noted here.

These longer omissions are as follows:

21 : 28–33.
24 : 14c–18a.
26 : 5–11.
28 : 14–19.
32 : 11–17.
34 : 28–33.
36 : 7b–9.
36 : 10b–13.
36 : 16–17.
36 : 26, 27b, 28a.
36 : 29–32.
37 : 2–5a.
37 : 11, 12ab, 13.

Of these omissions, 24: 14c–18a will be treated below under "Other Editorial Revision" and 32 : 11–17 under the "Elihu Speeches." It will be more convenient to consider the remaining omissions in the reverse order to that in which they are given above.

The last four of the omissions noted above, viz. 36 : 26, 27b, 28a, 29–32 and 37 : 2–5a, 11, 12ab, 13, fall, as Dr. Nichols has shown, into a group by themselves. When these portions are taken from their present positions and read one after the other, they form a connected and spirited psalm on a rain-storm — a psalm superior in poetic skill to the context in which they stand. Moreover, when this is done, the portions of the speech of Elihu from which these passages have been separated gain greatly in clearness and in poetic power. The reader will find the psalm of the rain-storm connectedly translated in the note on 37 : 13, and the parts of the speech of Elihu from which it has been separated, in the note on 37 : 12, and may see for himself how much clearer both compositions become when separated than the present text is now. The internal evidence of the material combines here with the external evidence of the Septuagint and Sahidic versions to show that this psalm was broken up and interpolated here after the exemplar from which the Septuagint was translated was written. The union of these two lines of evidence is on such a point conclusive.

It has also been shown by Dr. Nichols that three other sections which the Septuagint omits belong together, viz. 34:28–33; 36:7b–9 and 10b–13. These form a poem, or are parts of two poems, on the conduct and the fate of kings. (For the way they fit together, see note on 36:13.) When these sections are removed, the portions of the speeches of Elihu in which they are respectively embedded gain in clearness and force (see, for example, the note on 36:18). Here again the external evidence of the Septuagint and Sahidic versions combines with the internal evidence of the material itself to prove that an interpolation was made in the Hebrew text after the exemplar from which the Septuagint was made was written.

When we turn to 28:14–19, the same thing is true. The poet in the first thirteen verses of the chapter has shown that gems are mined from the earth, but that wisdom can be found in no locality. Verse 20,

> "Whence then cometh wisdom?
> And where is the place of understanding?"

connects directly with v. 13. Verses 14–19, which form a disquisition on the price of wisdom, enlarge upon a matter which, though incidentally mentioned in v. 13, is in reality, when thus expanded, irrelevant, and weakens the comparison of the chapter as a whole. We accordingly conclude again that the omissions of the Septuagint and Sahidic versions attest a late addition to the text.

In the case of 26:5–11 the decision is not so easy. Several of the leading modern interpreters believe that those verses originally belonged in another part of the poem, that they are misplaced in their present position, and that the Septuagint and Sahidic versions preserve the memory of a time when they did not belong here. This opinion does not, however, seem well founded. Verse 12 does not connect at all with v. 4 and it is certain that something must have stood between them. Verses 5–11 not only form an admirable connection where they now stand, but treat of a theme which the poet has elsewhere (9:1 ff., ch. 12), represented Job as treating. The theme is handled here in the vigorous, poetic way in which the poet, who puts his best poetry into the mouth of Job, makes Job speak, and it seems most probable that he wrote these verses for the place where we now find them.

On the other hand, the likeness of the theme to that of 9:1 ff., together with some differences in the handling of the theme, which seem to contradict ch. 9 (see notes on 26:7 and 10), would seem to have afforded the Septuagint translator, whose tendency to omit repetitions we have already noted, a reason to omit these verses. If this is the right explanation, as seems most probable, our difficulty has been caused by the fact that his method led him in this case to omit an unusually long section.

With regard to 21:28–33 a decision is still more difficult. The verses when correctly translated are very fitting in the mouth of Job, contain some fine poetical touches, and are not out of harmony with the context (see notes on them). On the other hand, they might be dropped out and would never be seriously missed. Verse 34 connects very well with v. 27. The internal evidence is very evenly balanced. If, however, as we have seen, the Septuagint translator could omit one section of considerable length, he may have omitted another, and a possible motive for such an omission may be found in the fact that 21:28 may have been regarded as a repetition of 20:7. On the whole, therefore, we do not seem to be justified in regarding the verses as an interpolation.

2. *The Elihu Speeches.* — Chs. 32–37. A study of the omissions of the Septuagint has revealed the fact that there are in Job some minor interpolations. Are there

any larger ones? In answer to this inquiry it must be noted that chs. 32–37, which constitute the Elihu speeches, have been regarded by a large number of scholars during the past century as an addition to the book made by some one later than the author of the original work.

The main reasons which have led to these conclusions are as follows: (1) While all the other characters are mentioned in the prologue and the epilogue, Elihu is not mentioned in either of these. His absence from the prologue is atoned for, it is true, by a little prose prologue to his speeches (32 : 1–6). That prologue, however, itself excites suspicion by the way in which it interrupts the flow of the poetical thought, and it also fails to account for Elihu's presence at the great debate. But even if this prosaic introduction of Elihu in ch. 32 be thought to account satisfactorily for his absence from the prologue, his absence from the epilogue, where a reward is assigned to each of the great actors in the poem, is still inexplicable. If Elihu had been a creation of the poet and had been intended by him as the vindicator of Jehovah from Job's aspersions, he should have so changed the epilogue as to make him receive a greater reward than Job; if he intended him to be a mere repeater of the arguments of the friends, who, like them, is but a plausible champion of an outworn theology, he should have made his condemnation in the epilogue as prominent as theirs. The absence of Elihu here strongly suggests that he is the creature of a later interpolator.

(2) The speeches of Elihu interrupt the development of the poem and detract from its artistic perfection. Job at the end of ch. 31 (*i.e.* 31 : 35–37) appeals to Jehovah. The whole question had previously been threshed out; the friends had presented their arguments, had been foiled, and had found nothing in reply better than denunciation. Job had turned away from earthly help and made his appeal to God. A poet possessed of the great artistic sense which the author of this book manifests in other

respects would, if he were going to make Jehovah reply at all, make him speak, one feels, at that point. To prepare the way for the dénouement, to work the imagination up to the highest pitch for it, and then to introduce a long disquisition from a new character which adds nothing of importance to the poem, is an inartistic procedure. It weakens the force of the climax. Of such a violation of the canons of good art there is reason to believe the poet was not guilty. The opening words of the address of Jehovah in 38:2 ff. refer, as all interpreters agree, to Job. They connect directly with 31:35–37. The Divine Speaker utterly ignores Elihu. Had the author of ch. 38 been also the author of chs. 32–37 this probably would not have been the case.

(3) The speeches of Elihu contain nothing that is not contained either in the speeches of the friends or in that of Jehovah. His arguments are substantially the arguments of the friends. He presents no explanation for suffering which they have not presented, though he enlarges slightly more than they upon the function of suffering in bringing the sinner to repentance. The real attitude of the author towards these arguments is presented in chs. 4–31. In those chapters he has portrayed the inadequacy of these arguments; he has shown how out of accord with experience this view of life is. It is hardly conceivable, therefore, that he should permit the same things to be said again and to pass without reply as though they were unanswerable. He, then, can hardly have been the one who placed the Elihu speeches in the book.

(4) In their descriptions of the connection of God with nature the Elihu speeches anticipate in an inferior way what is said more powerfully by Jehovah subsequently. This detracts from the full majesty and force of the speech of Jehovah. Were a great poet to represent God as speaking (and our poet was incontestably one of the world's greatest) he would hardly have adopted a device to detract from the majesty and sublimity of the Divine

utterance. That he did not do this is shown by the fact that in 32:13 Elihu protests against bringing God into the discussion at all. One cannot well believe that the poet condemned his own course in advance. Such a protest might come from the pen of an interpolator, who wished to mark his disapproval of a poem which he could not suppress, but hardly from the pen of the original writer.

(5) Another point which tells against the genuineness of the Elihu speeches is the inferior character of their poetry in comparison with the rest of the poem. The phrasing is frequently lacking in rhythm, descending often to the prosaic, and the splendid imagination which marks the genuine work of the great poet is here conspicuously absent. The use of figures is less frequent, and where figures occur their use is less original and powerful. The chapters bear the literary marks of having been coined in a much more commonplace mind.

(6) The language of these chapters points in the same direction. It is less pure Hebrew than the rest of the book; the proportion of Aramaisms in it is much greater.

These reasons have been sufficient to persuade the majority of modern scholars that chs. 32–37 are an interpolation. On the other hand the genuineness of these chapters has been defended by Budde, Wildeboer, Cornill, Briggs, and Genung. Those who maintain their genuineness do not all estimate the value of Elihu's contribution to the poem in the same way. Briggs and Genung hold that he is introduced as the self-confident young man, who intervenes in the debate to set both parties right, but contributes little that is of value. On this view the poet introduced him to show finally and more fully the inadequacy of the views of the friends, and to prepare for the transition from Job's warped conceptions to the majestic address of Jehovah. Plausible as this theory may be at first sight, it is not satisfactory. It entirely fails to account for the inartistic way in which these chapters come in, nor does it explain their inferior quality and unpoetical character. Moreover, if the author had intended to represent Elihu as the self-confident, bombastic dialectician, he would carefully have refrained from allowing him to anticipate the majestic words of Jehovah.

Cornill's defence of the genuineness of these chapters is different. He claims that without them the book contains no solution of the problem of suffering; he holds that a thinker of such power as this poet must have had a solution for the problem, and that we actually find that solution in the speeches of Elihu in the teaching that suffering has a teleological value, its aim being to give man self-knowledge, bring him to repentance, and induce him to take a right attitude toward God.

This view is not, upon closer examination, more satisfactory than the preceding one. It is not true that the author does not elsewhere offer a solution of the problem. While he does not present that solution in argued speech, he suggests it in a still more powerful way by dramatic action. His solution, as noted above (p. 12. ff.), is that religious experience is the explanation of life's enigma. He not only has a solution, but one much more profound than any which the Elihu chapters furnish, and the presentation of which in strong and artistic form the presence of the Elihu speeches mars.

We conclude, therefore, that these speeches are an interpolation. The motive for such an interpolation, too, it not far to seek. The poet had made Job speak with a boldness which shocked the moral sense of orthodox believers; he had also permitted Job to silence the defenders of the views which had satisfactorily explained God's providences to preceding generations, and which the pious held in grateful reverence. If the poem was to circulate at all (and it was too popular to suppress entirely) it was very natural that some pious soul or souls should seek to make it less offensive by the introduction of a speaker who should voice the orthodox views, and who, because no reply was made to him, should seem to do so triumphantly. The history of other Old Testament books, as for example Ecclesiastes (see Barton's *Ecclesiastes* in the *International Critical Commentary*, pp. 43–46), proves that such motives were potent among the Jews.

Until recently it has been held by those who believe the Elihu chapters to be an interpolation that one author composed them all. The present writer is compelled, however, to agree with Dr. H. H. Nichols (see *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 97–186) in believing that the work of two different supplementers to the book, or critics of it, has been combined in what now constitutes the Elihu speeches.

The reasons for this view are as follows: 1. In ch. 32 there is considerable repetition. The prose introduction (vs. 1–5) is really repeated in the poetry of vs. 6–17. An examination of vs. 6–17 shows that vs. 11–17 repeat in part Elihu's reasons for speaking advanced in vs. 6–10, concluding with the same words. This suggests a duplication. This suggestion is confirmed by the contents. Verses 11–17 are addressed to the friends, while vs. 6–10 are addressed to Job. The suggestion also finds confirmation in the Septuagint and Sahidic versions, which omitted vs. 11–17. While it is possible, as noted above, that the translator of the Septuagint omitted these verses because he thought them a repetition, it is also possible that their absence is due to an early disturbance of the text at this point. If, now, we regard 32 : 1–17 as a compound of two separate introductions to two originally separate Elihu addresses, one of which was addressed to Job and the other to the friends, it is quite possible to separate the two strands and to gain two introductions, each of which is complete and clear and contains no repetitions. (See below, p. 29.)

2. On examination of the remaining parts of the Elihu speeches, exclusive of the interpolated psalm of the rainstorm and poem on kings referred to above, we find a similar difference. Chapter 34 is addressed, not to Job,

but to "wise men," the class to which the friend presumably belonged. Job is mentioned in the third person, no sympathy with his sufferings is expressed, no hint is given that he had any problem to solve, but he is mercilessly condemned as a blasphemer and a "man of iniquity" (vs. 7, 8, 36). The chapter is a passionate appeal to the wise to condemn the positions taken in the poem made by one who felt the greatest repugnance for its doctrine.

This is in striking contrast to the rest of the Elihu speeches as represented in 32:18–22, and chs. 33, 35, 36, and 37. In these portions Elihu not only addresses himself to Job, but is represented as a divinely appointed messenger for Job's reclamation (see note on 33:23). The tone of his remarks to Job is one of kindly, but serious, admonition, not of severe condemnation. He plays throughout the rôle of one who would redeem Job and win him to repentance, who would explain to his reason the mysterious ways of Providence and bring Job into harmony with God. His monologue is to the end a "mild-mannered homily," in striking contrast to the severe tone of ch. 34. We conclude, therefore, that two different writers have been at work here.

This is confirmed by the fact that ch. 34 as it now stands interrupts an address of Elihu to Job. In 33:31–33 Elihu has admonished Job to listen to him and has promised to teach him wisdom. As the text now stands, instead of doing this he, in ch. 34, denounces Job to others, but in 35:2 returns to address Job. Chapter 35:1 ("Moreover Elihu answered and said") is clearly a later editorial addition. Remove ch. 34 and this editorial gloss, and 35:2 ff. so naturally continues the discourse for which 33:31–33 has prepared the way, that we cannot but believe that a piece of cloth from another literary garment has been placed between them by some editor.

With ch. 34 we should also put 35:15, 16, two verses which speak of Job in the third person, and which are evidently out of place where they now stand.

If we designate the main Elihu writer — the author of the "mild-mannered homily" — by A, and the writer who appeals to the wise men by B, the material contributed by each is as follows:

To A belong 32: 1, 6–10, 18–22; 33: 1–33; 35: 2–14; 36: 2–5, 10a, 6a, 12 [of the Septuagint text], 14, 15, 6b, 7a, 18–25, 27a, 28b, 33; 37: 1, 5b, 6a, 7–10, 14–24. To B belong 32: 2a, 3a, 17a, 11–16; 34: 2–24, 26, 27; 35: 15, 16, and 34: 34–37. The rearrangement of the material in chs. 36 and 37 just indicated is made on the authority of the Septuagint and Sahidic versions, which reveal that the rain-storm psalm and a part of the poem on kings have been interpolated here, and that in the process the original order has been destroyed. In 32: 1–6 it is clear that two strands have not only been woven together, but that an editorial hand has expanded the result. This hand added vs. 2b, 3b, 4, and 5.

It is probable that these two interpolators did their work independently. Their tone is so different that it is inconceivable that one of them intended to supplement the other. They represent two different attitudes which the orthodox took toward the book. The one, B, adds his postscript to the discussion to scornfully condemn Job; the other, A, seeks by a more gracious handling of the theme to make the work contribute to what he regarded as the real solution of the problem of suffering. Probably the work circulated for a little in two copies, each of which contained one of these antidotes to the book's heresy. An early editor wove these two interpolations together, thereby mixing the two antidotes into one.

While the reasons advanced convince the present writer that the Elihu speeches are not a unity, it should be noted that this view is a newer one than the view that the Elihu material is interpolated, and, because it has not, like the other theory, been subjected to long criticism, cannot be regarded as resting on as secure a basis.

3. *Other Interpolations.* In addition to the Elihu speeches two other passages in the poem are regarded by many scholars as later interpolations. These are the praise of wisdom in ch. 28 and the description of behemoth and leviathan, the hippopotamus and the crocodile, 40:15–41:34. These passages should be considered separately.

(1) The praise of Wisdom in ch. 28 represents a very different mood and point of view from that portrayed in the chapters on each side of it. Job in 27:1–6 had been engaged in a passionate assertion of his integrity; he was smarting under the injustice of his friends' remarks to him. In 29:2 ff. his thoughts are still passionately centered upon himself as he pathetically recalls the former joys of his prosperous life to contrast them with his present desolation. In contrast to this the mood of ch. 28 is the mood of calm meditation. The character that speaks there tells all he knows of the marvels of the processes of mining, in order to say that, difficult as it is to obtain silver and gold, it is still more difficult to find wisdom. This calm, contemplative mood in which one recalls strange processes in long-drawn-out detail is entirely out of harmony with Job's mood at this stage of the discussion.

The point of view of the chapter is equally foreign to that of Job. Job had up to this point been earnestly protesting against the way in which God had ordered his life. In chs. 29–31 that protest still continues. Chapter 28, on the other hand, is written from the point of view of one who acquiesces in the will of God, and who regards his way as the embodiment of the supremest wisdom. If Job had reached this point of view at this stage of the discussion, the speech of Jehovah would have been unnecessary.

The situation is not much relieved if we regard 27:7–23 as a speech of Zophar, for the calm tone and exalted poetry of ch. 28 are equally out of harmony with the rabid violence of the speeches of Zophar. We are compelled, therefore, to believe that this chapter is a later insertion in the poem. It is kindred to the poetical praises of wisdom in Pr. 8 and the Wisdom of Solomon 7.

Whether this praise of wisdom was taken from another work, or whether, as Duhm has suggested, it was an independent poem complete in itself, having as its refrain, "Whence then cometh wisdom?" we cannot say. If, as shown above, p. 21, verses 14–19 are a later addition to ch. 28, the symmetry of the strophes between the recurring refrain is somewhat spoiled and the probability that it was an independent, complete whole is lessened. From whatever source it came, though, it is certainly foreign to the book of Job. This fact, however, in no way detracts from the intrinsic beauty of the chapter itself.

(2) Most scholars are also agreed that the description of behemoth and leviathan in 40:15–41:34 is a later addition. In this view we also concur for the following reasons: (*a*) The description of these animals is unsuited to their present context and diverts attention from the theme in hand. The second address of Jehovah to Job, which begins in 40:6, deals with the fact that Job presumed to be more righteous than God. He had challenged God's righteousness, and by doing so had implied that he possessed a finer sense of justice than God. The critic of God is asked to put himself in God's place, to humble the proud, to see whether he can bring about a more just rule than God; then suddenly the long description of these animals follows. Instead of asking Job if he can subdue wicked men, God appears to be asking him if he can subdue gigantic brutes who have nothing to do with righteousness. Then, too, the description of the animals is so long that the memory of the original question is lost. The description greatly weakens the treatment of the theme. (*b*) If the poet had composed this description, he would have placed these animals with

the description of other animals in ch. 39. In that chapter such descriptions come in appropriately and reënforce the argument; here they detract from it. (*c*) The long-drawn-out and labored descriptions in this passage are in striking contrast with the descriptions of ch. 39. There a few poetic lines in the form of questions make the hinds, the wild ass, the wild ox, the ostrich, the horse, and the eagle stand out in lifelike reality; here a long and unpoetic enumeration of details produces in the end an impressive picture, but the effect is produced by methods so different and so inferior that it is hardly possible that the same writer can have composed them both.

4. *Editorial Changes in Other Parts of the Book.* If whole chapters have been interpolated, such as chs. 28, 32–37, and 40:15–41:34, is the remainder of the poem in the form in which it left the hands of the author? In reply it should be said that with the exception of 14:4; 22:8, 17, 18, which seem to be glosses, there is no reason to question that up to the end of ch. 23 the poem is, apart from textual corruption, as the poet left it. In ch. 24, however, difficulties present themselves. Verses 5–8 of that chapter interrupt Job's description of the doings of a certain class of violent, wicked men, who kidnap children and make them slaves, by the description of some poor, wretched outcasts, who would be powerless to harm any one. The passage is certainly out of place. It seems like a description of the fate of the wicked made by one of the friends, reminding one of the words of Bildad in 18:5 ff.

Again, it should be noted that the Septuagint and Sahidic versions omit vs. 14c–18a, and that vs. 17–22 and 24 are out of harmony with the tenor of Job's discourse and are, like vs. 5–8, quite in the tone of Bildad. This raises a somewhat complicated problem, since the omission of the Septuagint does not coincide with the portion which is contrary to the spirit of Job. Scholars have, however, recognized that 14c is out of place, and it is probable that the omission was, like many others, made by the translator of the Septuagint in the effort to gain what seemed to him a harmonious text. The difference of point of view in vs. 17–22, 24, as compared with the rest of the chapter and their likeness to the trend of Bildad's utterances and to vs. 5–8, lead one to believe that, like those verses, they were taken from a speech of this friend. As the Septuagint contains vs. 5–8 and vs. 18b–24, it is probable that the transfer of these verses to their present position had already been made in the exemplar used by the Septuagint translator, and that the omission of vs. 14c–18a was made by him for the reason already suggested.

It has long been recognized that the speech of Bildad in ch. 25 is far too short; its length does not correspond to that of the speeches in the remainder of the poem. If, therefore, the parts of ch. 24 which are not in harmony with their context can be fitted on to it in such a way as to make a continuous speech which in tone shall accord with the general point of view of Bildad, we may feel some confidence that we have recovered what was, perhaps, the poet's original order.

Before attempting this, however, a passage of similar tone in ch. 30, which is also out of harmony with its context, must be considered. Job is in ch. 30 describing how, in contrast to his former dignity, men of lower station mock at him. In the midst of this description vs. 3–8 introduce a description of some outcasts from society who lived apart from men, skulking about in holes, not near enough to mock at Job and for whose scorn one even in his condition would not care. The verses are quite out of place where they stand, but would well continue the description of the fate of the ignoble wicked which we have already found in 24:5–8. It is probable that they belonged to the same context originally.

Accordingly we tentatively reconstruct Bildad's third speech as follows: 25:1–6; 24:17, 18, 5–8; 30:3–8;

24:21, 22, 19, 20, 24. For a connected translation of the passages, see note on 25:6. Reconstructed in this way the last address of Bildad began with a statement of the exaltation and awe-inspiring majesty of God. With this he proceeded to contrast the wormlike condition of men. The figure of the worm suggested the way the low-born or unfortunate wicked are driven forth by God to drag out a miserable existence in deserts or out-of-the-way places. He then returns for a moment to describe the brief, prosperous career of successful sinners (24:21, 22) and closes with a statement of the swift destruction of all sinners.

We thus gain a characteristic and consistent speech for Bildad. The portions of chs. 24 and 30 which remain are consistent speeches of Job quite in his usual vein in this part of the book. The reader can test this for himself in ch. 30 by reading it without vs. 3–8; he may also find the parts of ch. 24 which belong to that speech of Job connectedly translated in the note on 24:25. Job is in one of his bitterest and most discontented moods; he begins by declaring that we cannot understand God's ways. Oppressors remove landmarks, wrong the orphan, the widow, and the poor, kidnap children and make slaves of them. Murderers, adulterers, and thieves prowl about at night, and God gives them security. He concludes with the challenge: "If it isn't so, who will prove me a liar?" It was this speech which led Bildad to dwell on God's purity and majesty at the beginning of ch. 25.

One cannot read ch. 24 relieved of its extraneous material without perceiving how greatly the address of Job gains in point and in power by the removal of the contradictory matter. Whether we have rightly reconstructed the speech of Bildad or not (and our reconstruction is, of course, purely tentative), we are certainly right in thus restoring Job's argument here.

When Job's speech in ch. 24 is thus recovered, it becomes clear why material was taken away from Bildad with which to dilute it. It could only seem to orthodox editors brutally blasphemous.

It should be noted here that, instead of reconstructing Bildad's third speech out of chs. 24 and 30 as we have done, many scholars reconstruct it out of ch. 26. Indeed this is the favorite method with those who attempt its reconstruction at all. In favor of this procedure the names of Grill, Kuenen, Bickell, Duhm, Peake, and McFadyen may be quoted. Marshall, like the others, couples the two chapters, but thinks that they form a speech of Zophar. With none of these scholars can we agree. Zophar's third speech is, as we shall see, embedded now in ch. 27, but ch. 26 seems clearly to belong to Job.

It has been claimed that it is out of harmony with Job's present mood, but that statement does not appear to be well founded. Job in ch. 24 had not said that God would favor the wicked man; he had said that God's ways are hidden from man, that man does not see God's day, and that for the present God gives the wicked security. The whole speech was an irritable and suffering invalid's statement of the irritating side of the fact that we cannot understand the ways of God. In ch. 26 Job takes up the same theme again. He enlarges upon God's greatness and power, declaring that we see the outskirts of his ways only, but that no one can understand the greatness of his power. Upon this same thought Job had dwelt in chs. 7, 9, 12 with indignation, because of the treatment which he was receiving at the hands of God; here his thought is slightly more calm, because his mind is for the moment turning a little away from himself.

The general thought is not, therefore, inconsistent in the mouth of Job, and the argument from the poetry and the allusions is in favor of assigning the speech to him. The poet places his greatest poetry in Job's mouth. Bildad is a commonplace man, as he is portrayed, and deals in commonplace thoughts. Zophar is a rough, ruthless fellow, the strains of whose speech are uniformly harsh. Chapter 26 is neither commonplace nor harsh. It is a magnificent flight of imagination vigorously and poetically expressed. Its vigorous figures are many of them borrowed from the Babylonian Creation Epic (see notes). These allusions give great vigor to the poetry wherever we find them. Elsewhere the poet puts allusions to that Epic into the mouth of Job only (see chs. 3 and 9), and this is a strong argument for supposing that he wrote ch. 26 for the lips of Job also. We accordingly conclude that the poet intended ch. 26 as Job's reply to Bildad's third speech.

Passing now to ch. 27, it, like ch. 24, contains considerable material which is unsuited to Job's whole point of view. This material is found in vs. 7–11, 13–23, and, as Stuhlmann, Kuenen, Bickell, Duhm, Peake, and McFadyen agree, this material constituted the third speech of Zophar. It is impossible that it should have been uttered by Job unless he renounced altogether the point of view held by him both before and afterwards; it is, on the other hand, quite in the style of Zophar.

This speech of Zophar originally followed ch. 26, while Job's last address to the friends and appeal to Jehovah was composed of 27:1–6, 12; 29:2–25; 30:1, 2, 9–31; 31:1–34, 38–40, 35–37.

When the original order of these chapters is restored and the various interpolations are removed, it appears that the form of the poem was symmetrical to the end, and that the artist who composed it exhibited to the very last his masterly skill — indeed some of the finest manifestations of that skill came at the end of the work. It is only due to later editors that that skill is not now patent to every reader of the book.

The motive of this editorial work is not far to seek. The poet had made Job a relentless critic of orthodox opinion and even of God, and yet had allowed the epilogue to say that his course was more pleasing to Jehovah than that of the friends who had defended orthodox views and had championed God. Such literature seemed to orthodox readers of the book most irreverent, and this transfer of material from the speeches of the friends to those of Job was no doubt undertaken in order to make it appear that he came around to the orthodox point of view, at least in some degree. In other words the motive was the same as that which led to the Elihu interpolation — to break the force of the great heresy of the poem.

THE ART OF THE BOOK

The book of Job has sometimes been called a drama. If by this designation it is intended to class the poem with the dramas of Shakespeare or Euripides, the term is a misnomer. There is not in Job the action and the development of a plot necessary to a drama. A drama intended for acting would never have had all the actors sitting on a dunghill throughout the play and moving only their tongues! The ancient Semitic world had no drama; even the Song of Songs is not an exception. Such dramatic elements as the poem of Job possesses are inherent in all Oriental life. The Orientals are much more expressive than we of the West. All their speech and gestures have an element which appears to an Occidental dramatic. Job is a dramatic poem only in the sense that it is true to Oriental life; but it is not a drama in the sense that it develops a plot which can be revealed by action. The poem depicts the growth of a soul when tried by suffering. Genung has happily named it "The Epic of the Inner Life." It is a powerful and artistic portrayal of the struggles of such a soul, of its wild and unreasonable arraignment of life as it suffers acutely and its suffering is aggravated by disordered nerves (see, *e.g.*, ch. 3); of the way a vigorous intellect, quickened by suffering, brushes aside false and inadequate theology and seeks to ground itself upon reality; how such a soul, as it is driven to accuse Providence of injustice, is as inevitably driven, if it is thoroughgoing, to find its one hope of justice in God, there being no refuge from God but God; how the inadequacy of the present life for a reasonable theodicy leads to faith in a hereafter; and, finally, how the mystic experience of God is the one solution for life's baffling problems.

The poet possessed the splendid artistic genius which touches the common things of life and transfigures them. Like all who live in Palestine, he was familiar with farming, cattle raising, the reaping of grain, the winnowing of wheat. The struggle of the weary slave through the long hot day's work, the calving of the hinds, the patience of the ox in the furrow, become in his hands luminous pictures of the toil and sorrows of man. He was an acute observer of nature. The calamity which the drying up of a spring brings, the suggestiveness of the way the roots of trees seek water and the roots of an old stump send up sprouts, the marvels of thundercloud and snowflake, all become in his hands beautiful figures; and their own wonder and beauty seem the greater as the poet's fine presentation of them makes them revealers of things human and divine. With a few powerful words he makes the wild ox, the wild ass, the ostrich, and the horse stand before us, each caught in a characteristic attitude, as though by an instantaneous photograph. Clouds floating in the sky are like bottles filled with water. The dawn is a beautiful woman peeping over the hills; the rays of light are her eyelashes.

The book is studded with exquisite figures, and the speech of Jehovah is, for sustained dignity and beauty, unsurpassed in the world's literature. It is the product of the highest genius.

The poet has devoted his best efforts to the speeches of Job and Jehovah. These contain his finest poetry, and in depicting the character of Job his skill in catching the mixture of good and bad, sane and foolish in an invalid who has a really noble nature, is masterly. The characters of the friends are less well done. They interested the poet less. Nevertheless each of them stands out with an individuality of his own: Eliphaz, the dignified orthodox wise man, who has just a touch of mysticism; Bildad, the commonplace mind who finds in the out-worn proverbs of the past the basis of life's philosophy; and Zophar, the rough debater, who cares less for the form of his argument or for the feelings of his friend than he does for carrying his point.

The book of Job is one of the world's masterpieces. It stands beside the greatest of the works of Æschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides, or Dante's *Divina Comedia*, or Goethe's *Faust* as an immortal portrayal of the struggles of the soul.

DATE OF THE POEM

It is no longer necessary to discuss seriously the Talmudic opinion (Baba Bathra, 15a), which was also shared by the translators of the Syriac Bible, that the poem of Job was written by Moses. Critical and historical study has made it quite clear that the problems discussed in this poem were not yet problems in that early time. The elements in the language and coloring of the poem which were formerly thought to confirm that opinion are now seen to be in part due to the skill of the poet in adapting his picture to the supposed situation. The linguistic indications are now understood to be inconsistent with this view and to point to a later date.

The points of contact with the book of Deuteronomy (compare Job 24:2 with Deut. 19:14; 27:17; Job 31:26 with Deut. 4:19; 17:3–7, and Job 31:9 with Deut. 22:22) point conclusively to a date for Job later than Josiah's reform in the year 621 B.C.

In the present state of our knowledge a date earlier than Jeremiah is out of the question. The poem is written from an absolutely monotheistic standpoint. There is no hint in it that there can be any god but One.

Amos was a practical monotheist, it is true, but Jeremiah was the first to definitely declare that heathen deities were mere figments of the imagination (Jer. 8:19; 10:14, 15; 14:22). The poem is also written from a purely individualistic standpoint. It discusses the problem, Why does the righteous individual suffer? Such a discussion seems hardly possible before the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The earlier point of view had been national. Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah speak of national sins. In their preaching the sins of the individual gain significance as they affect the fortunes of the nation. When the nation was not the moral unit, that unit was the family, as in the story of Achan (Josh. 7). Jeremiah was the first to declare the individual the moral unit (Jer. 31:31), and Ezekiel had explained and enforced the provision at length (Eze. 18). The influence of this prophetic teaching led to the insertion of a statement of the principle in Deut. 24:16, but the insertion is later than the code, as it interrupts the context in which it now stands. The general outlook of our poem upon religious and moral problems places it, accordingly, at once either in or after the Babylonian Exile. This general outlook is confirmed by the fact that the poem (Job 3:3 ff. and 10:18) is dependent upon Jer. 20:14–18.

The great prophet of the Exile, the author of Isa. 40–55, discusses, as does the author of Job, the problem of suffering. The relation of these two discussions to one another should be a factor in determining the date. There are a number of points of close similarity in thought and phrasing between the two works. Compare Job 14:2 with Isa. 40:7; Job 9:8 with Isa. 44:24; Job 15:35 with Isa. 59:4; Job 13:28 with Isa. 50:9 and 51:8; Job 26:12 with Isa. 51:9; and Job 30:21 with Isa. 63:10. It is impossible, however, from these passages to reach a definite conclusion. The allusions are for one reason or another indeterminate. No clear literary dependence of one writer on the other can be asserted.

Broadly considered, the two works have much in common. The suffering Job as presented by the poet is strikingly similar to the suffering Servant whom the prophet portrays. Nevertheless a closer examination shows that there are fundamental differences. The Servant is a national figure — the personified nation. His sufferings are the sufferings of the nation; Job is an individual. The sufferings of the Servant are vicarious, by means of them the Gentiles are to be brought to God; there is in Job no hint at vicarious suffering. It might be argued that Job is earlier than the Second Isaiah because if he had known the explanation of suffering which the vicarious view offers, he would have used it. This argument is, however, inconclusive. In one sense the poet does make use of vicarious suffering. By allowing the prologue to stand (or possibly by himself shaping part of the prologue into its present form) he has let the reader into the secret that Job is suffering in reality for the conversion of Satan. To this extent he has made use of the principle of vicarious suffering. The idea, however, forms no part of his plan; it is simply an incident. He never returns to tell us whether Satan was convinced, and he pictures Job as quite ignorant of the purpose of his sufferings. Job struggles on, growing in soul as he struggles, reaches the port of calm peace through the mystic vision of God, and at the end never guesses that he has suffered vicariously. This solution was, accordingly, no real solution to our poet. It might well seem to the prophet that the sufferings of the one nation that knew the true God were intended to benefit other nations, while the poet may have seen in the vicarious theory no adequate moral explanation of the sufferings of an individual. The fact that he did not make larger use of the vicarious principle does not prove that he was not familiar with it, but only that it did not appeal to him. There is, then, no reason for not dating the poem later than the Second Isaiah, if other evidence shall justify such a date. There seems to be such evidence.

In Job 12:17–19 there is apparently a reference to the carrying away of kings, counsellors, and priests at the time of the Babylonian Exile. While this allusion would not necessarily place the poem later than the Second Isaiah, the calm and dispassionate way in which the allusion is made indicates that the event had become somewhat remote in time. Some have thought to find in Job 12:7–10 an allusion to the P document (Gen. 1:20, 25), but while it is possible that there is such allusion, the language is too vague to make it certain. If such an allusion could be proven, it would show that the composition of Job is later than 450 B.C.

A more decisive reference is found in Job 7:17, where it seems clear that we have a parody of the language of Ps. 8:5. It is now generally recognized that the Psalter was compiled to be the hymn-book of the second temple, and the first book of Psalms (3–41) was in all probability collected in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra. A parody on the familiar words of a well-known hymn points, accordingly, to a date later than 444 B.C. The force of this argument is confirmed by another consideration. The 8th Psalm is so similar in tone and point of view to the little fragment which now forms vs. 1–6 of Psalm 19, and which is clearly out of place there, that it is clear that the two are of the same date, if not originally parts of one psalm. Since it has long been recognized that Ps. 19:2 by the use of the word "firmament" is posterior to the P document, or at the earliest contemporary with it, it becomes increasingly probable that the Psalm to which Job makes allusion is not earlier than about 450 B.C.

We are thus led to date Job about 400 B.C., and this date is confirmed by the fact that the book of Malachi, which dates from about 400, proves that the problem discussed in Job, as to whether God does reward the righteous with prosperity in this life and punish the wicked by adversity, was at that period an acute one; see Mal. 1:2; 2:17; and 3:13–15.

This date is confirmed by two other considerations. Satan, who appears in the prologue, is in Hebrew thought a post-Exilic figure. He is mentioned elsewhere only in post-Exilic works, viz. Zech. 3:1 and 1 Chr. 21:1. In the earlier time the Hebrews had been such thorough monotheists that they needed no Satan; Jehovah had, they thought, done everything. Amos says (ch. 3:6), "Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?" Another example of the same thing is found in 1 Kgs. 22:19–23. While there are, as we have already noted, elements of thought in the prologue which point to pre-Exilic times, it is altogether probable that this figure of Satan was introduced into the story after the Exile, and, perhaps, by the poet himself.

Another mark of post-Exilic date is the strong Aramaic coloring of the language. Aramaic words are scattered throughout the poem, although most numerous in the Elihu interpolations. But the days of classical Hebrew had passed before Job was composed, and the Aramaic which ultimately supplanted the Hebrew was beginning to make itself felt.

There is no good reason for placing the composition of Job at a later date than about 400. In the likenesses between Job and later parts of the Psalter (*e.g.* Job 7:10 and Ps. 103:16; Job 12:21, 24 and Ps. 107:40, 42), the Psalmists are probably dependent upon Job and not Job on the Psalms. The likenesses between Job and the book of Proverbs are all indeterminate as to priority. Compare Job 15:7 with Pr. 8:25; Job 18:5, 6 and 21:17 with Pr. 13:9 and 24:20; and Job 29:23, 24 with Pr. 16:15. In no instance is it clear that Job is dependent upon our book of Proverbs. If it be thought that he quoted proverbs, it must be remembered that the individual proverbs are much older than the present collection, and such quotation from Pr. 10–22 might well have been made from floating sayings and not from our book. The case is somewhat different when we come to the connected discourse material of Pr. 1–9, which is generally recognized as the latest portion of Proverbs. The one allusion to that in the genuine work of our poet is indeterminate. It is by no means clear that he knew Pr. 8: 25. The likenesses between Job 28: 15–19 and Pr. 3: 14 and 8: 11, 19 need not come into consideration here, for, as already shown, ch. 28 is a later interpolation.

A view which is as old as Theodore of Mopsuestia,[1] who died about 428 A.D., that Job was written late enough to be influenced by Greek literary forms and by Greek philosophic thought and that the use of dialogue is due to Greek influence, has been advocated in modern times by Holtzmann,[2] Siegfried,[3] and Friedländer.[4] The last-mentioned writer dates Job about 200 B.C., while Siegfried thinks that Job 15: 20 ff. alludes to the fate of Alexander Jannæus, who died in 79 B.C. This view has rightly met with little favor among Old Testament scholars. The view that the use of dialogue is due to Egyptian influence[5] rests on no more secure foundation.[6]

By the time that Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach was composed, about 180 B.C., Job was already a canonical book, for Sirach (49 : 9 Hebrew text) includes Job in his list of famous men, bringing him in between Ezekiel and the twelve minor prophets in a way which shows that he was gathering the names of books which had a sacred, or semicanonical, if not a canonical, character.

Such considerations as these have led many recent commentators to date the poem about 400 B.C. The Elihu speeches and other interpolations were probably added within the next century, for the time to antagonize such a work would be soon after its appearance, when the impact of its thought was fresh, and before a considerable degree of antiquity had rendered it sacred.

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[1] Cf. Migne, LXVI, cols. 697, 698.

[2] In Stade's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, II, 348–352.

[3] Cf. *Jewish Encyclopedia*, VII, 197.

[4] See his *Griechische Philosophie in Alten Testament*, Berlin, 1904, pp. 90–130.

[5] See Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständniss des Neuen Testament*, Göttingen, 1903, p. 27.

[6] Cf. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des Neuen Testaments*, Giessen, 1909, p. 137.

THE AUTHOR

The author of Job counted Job among the children of the East (1:3). The author himself, then, lived in western Palestine. If he wrote after the Exile, his home was somewhere in Judah. He was a man of wide experience of life and of keen observation. His sympathy with hired servants who work in the fields under a scorching sun (7:1, 2) makes it probable that he had known at some time such toil from experience. His familiarity with the ways of trade (17:3) suggests that he had been at one time engaged in it, and his vivid realization of the vicissitudes of caravan life makes it probable that he had engaged in caravan trading. On his journeys he had seen the wady-streams turbid with snow and ice (6:16), and at other times had suffered from the intolerable thirst which at the end of a long hot day afflicts those who find the stream dry by which they had planned to encamp (see Barton, *Wandering in Bible Lands*, pp. 215 ff.). He had travelled as far as the sea, and its restless and powerful waves had impressed him as the embodiment of pride (38:8, 11). He had in his trading travelled to Egypt, had been enough impressed by the papyrus and reed grass that he saw there to borrow an Egyptian proverb about them (8:11). The papyrus boats on the Nile had also attracted him (9:26) and he had borrowed an Egyptian word for "girdle" (12:21). Wherever he had travelled he had been keenly alive to nature. The beauties of dawn, the splendor of the thunder-storm, the ways of animals and men in the desert places of the earth (39:5–30; 24:5–8) had impressed him and called forth his sympathy.

More important than the events of his outward life is the fact that he had pondered deeply the problem of the moral and religious order of the world. Unable to be satisfied with the ready-made and easy solutions of his time, he mercilessly exposed them in his poem, suggesting, as we have seen, in a most artistic way a religious instead of an intellectual solution of them. In poetic power and moral insight this man, who must to us remain nameless, takes his position beside the greatest of our kind.

Detailed Analysis of the Argument

I. The Prologue; chs. 1, 2.
    (1) The station, character, and family of Job; 1:1–5.
    (2) The first heavenly conference at which Job's trials were ordained; 1:6–12.
    (3) The first series of disasters; 1:13–19.
    (4) Job's demeanor under these misfortunes; 1:20–22.
    (5) The second heavenly conference; 2:1–6.
    (6) The second test and its outcome; 2:7–10.
    (7) The coming of Job's three friends; 2:11–13.
II. Job's wail of despair; ch. 3.
    (1) Would God I had never been born; 3:1–10.
    (2) Would God I had died at birth; 3:11–19.
    (3) Why is death denied to the wretched? 3:20–26.
III. The great debate on suffering; chs. 4–31.
    1. The first speech of Eliphaz; chs. 4, 5.
        (1) The surprise of Eliphaz at Job's despair; 4:1–11.
        (2) The holiness of God and his creatures contrasted; 4:12–21.
        (3) Eliphaz applies the principle to Job; 5:1–7.
        (4) Job should seek God whose chastisements lead to richer blessing; 5:8–27.

2. Job's first reply to Eliphaz; chs. 6, 7.
    (1) Job justifies the violence of his complaint; 6:1–13.
    (2) Expresses disappointment at the attitude of his friends; 6:14–30.
    (3) Renews his outburst, complaining that, in addition to the hardships suffered by all men, God is cruelly tormenting him; 7:1–21.
3. Bildad's first speech; ch. 8.
    (1) The discriminating fairness of God; 8:1–7.
    (2) The moral wisdom of the ancients; 8:8–19.
    (3) Bildad's summary of the case; 8:20–22.
4. Job's first reply to Bildad; chs. 9, 10.
    (1) The greatness and terribleness of God prevent a man from establishing his innocence; ch. 9.
    (2) Job appeals to God to know how his sufferings are consistent with the divine nature; ch. 10.
5. Zophar's first speech; ch. 11.
    (1) Would that God would really answer Job; 11:2–6.
    (2) Zophar praises God's wisdom; 11:7–12.
    (3) He exhorts Job; 11:13–20.
6. Job's first reply to Zophar; chs. 12–14.
    (1) Job's irony as to the wisdom of his friends; 12:1–6.
    (2) All creation testifies to God's almighty rule; 12:7–10.
    (3) No one can resist God's might; 12:13–25.
    (4) Job's attitude towards government is superior to that of the friends; 13:1–12.
    (5) In spite of God's greatness Job will speak his mind; 13:13–22.
    (6) Job would know with what sins God charges him; 13:23–28.

    (7) The brevity of man's days; 14:1–6.
    (8) Trees more immortal than men; 14:7–12.
    (9) Job longs for life after death, that he may meet God; 14:13–17.
    (10) This longing is hopeless; 14:18–22.
7. The second speech of Eliphaz; ch. 15.
    (1) Eliphaz reproves and convicts Job; 15:1–16.
    (2) He quotes the wise as to the condition of the wicked; 15:17–35.
8. Job's second reply to Eliphaz; chs. 16, 17.
    (1) Job is weary of vain talk; 16:1–5.
    (2) He asserts his belief that God is permanently hostile to him; 16:6–17.
    (3) Faith in God and the validity of righteousness struggles through his storm of feeling; 16:18–17:9.
    (4) Nevertheless he expects Sheol only; 17:10–16.
9. Bildad's second speech; ch. 18.
    (1) Why does Job treat his friends with such contempt? 18:1–4.
    (2) The terrible fate of the wicked; 18:5–21.
10. Job's second reply to Bildad; ch. 19.
    (1) Job remonstrates against the continuance of unkind criticism; 19:1–6.
    (2) He vainly cries for help; 19:7–12.
    (3) Declares he is forsaken by all; 19:13–19.
    (4) He appeals to his friends for pity; 19:20–22.
    (5) Faith is born out of despair; 19:23–29.
11. Zophar's second speech; ch. 20.
    (1) Does not Job know how brief all the joy of the wicked is? 20:1–29.
12. Job's second reply to Zophar; ch. 21.
    (1) Job challenges the attention of his friends; 21:1–6.
    (2) He declares that the wicked are not overtaken by calamity, but live and prosper; 21:7–34.

13. The third speech of Eliphaz; ch. 22.
    - (1) Job's punishment proves him a sinner; 22: 1–5.
    - (2) He charges Job with certain specific sins; 22: 6–11.
    - (3) He warns Job by the fate of the wicked not to think that God cannot see; 22: 12–20.
    - (4) He instructs Job how to regain health and prosperity; 22: 21–30.
14. Job's third reply to Eliphaz; ch. 23 and 24: 1–4, 9–16, 23, 24. 25
    - (1) Job again expresses his vain longing to come face to face with God; 23: 1–9.
    - (2) God terrifies Job, though innocent, until Job is afraid; 23: 10–17.
    - (3) Job charges God with encouraging the wicked by deferring judgment upon them; 24: 1–4, 9–16, 23, 24.
15. Bildad's third speech; 25: 1–6, 24: 17, 18, 5–8; 30: 3–8, 24: 19–22, 24.
    - (1) God's holiness and man's impurity contrasted; 25: 1–6; 24: 17, 18.
    - (2) The fate of ignoble sinners; 24: 5–8; 30: 3–8.
    - (3) The fate of powerful sinners; 24: 21, 22, 19, 20, 24.
16. Job's third reply to Bildad; ch. 26.
    - (1) Bildad has never helped the men whom he decries to be better; 26: 1–5.
    - (2) God sees everything, but is himself inscrutable; 26: 6–14.
17. Zophar's third speech; 27: 7–11, 13–23.
    - (1) The hopelessness of the godless; 27: 7–11, 13–23.
18. Job's third reply to Zophar and his appeal to God; 27: 1–6, 12; 29: 1–25; 30: 1, 2, 9–31; 31: 1–40.

- (1) Job swears his innocence; 27:1–6, 12.
- (2) An interpolated poem on wisdom — not a part of Job's speech; ch. 28.
- (3) Job longs for the bygone days of his prosperity; ch. 29.
- (4) He contrasts with these his present forlorn condition; 30:1, 2, 9–31.
- (5) He reasserts his innocence and appeals to God; 31:1–34, 38–40, 35–37.

IV. The Elihu Interpolations; chs. 32–37.

1. The work of an Elihu interpolator whom we call "A"; 32:1, 6–10, 18–22; 33:1–33; 35:2–14; 36:2–5, 10a, 6a, 12 [Septuagint text], 14, 15, 6b, 7a, 18–25, 27a, 28b, 33; 37:1, 5b, 6a, 7–10, 14–24.
    - (1) The introduction of Elihu; 32:1, 6–10, 18–22.
    - (2) Elihu's first address to Job; 33:1–30.
        - (*a*) Job is invited to listen to Elihu, who is a man and will not terrify him; 33:1–7.
        - (*b*) Elihu restates Job's position; 33:8–13.
        - (*c*) God seeks by night visions and by chastisements to redeem men; 33:14–30.
    - (3) Elihu's second address; 33:31–34; 35:2–14.
        - (*a*) Elihu adjures Job to listen further; 33:31–33.
        - (*b*) God is impassible; Job's sins cannot harm, nor his righteousness profit God; 35:2–8.
        - (*c*) Men in misfortune cry to God in pride and not in penitence: therefore God does not hear; 35:9–14.
    - (4) Elihu's third address; chs. 36 and 37, with the exceptions noted below.
        - (*a*) Elihu begs Job to listen while he tells the truth about God; 36:2–4.

(*b*) God, though mighty, chastises to produce penitence; 36:5, 10a, 6a, 12 [Septuagint text], 14, 15, 6b, 7a, 18.
(*c*) He urges Job to repent; 36:19–25.
(*d*) As a motive to repentance God's greatness is urged; 36:27a, 28b, 33; 37:1, 5b, 6a, 7–10.
(*e*) Elihu's final appeal to Job; 37:14–24.

2. The work of an Elihu interpolator whom we call "B"; 32:2a, 3a, 17a, 11–16; 34:2–24, 26, 27; 35:15, 16; 34:34–37.
   (1) The introduction of Elihu; 32:2a, 3a, 17a, 11–16.
   (2) Elihu appeals to all wise men to make a sweeping condemnation of Job; 34:2–24, 26, 27; 35:15, 16; 34:34–37.
      (*a*) Elihu asks the attention of wise men to Job's statement; 34:2–9.
      (*b*) He asserts that God can do no wrong; 34:10–15.
      (*c*) Injustice is not tolerable in earthly rulers, much less does it exist in God; 34:16–24, 26, 27.
      (*d*) Job is only complaining because God takes no notice of arrogance; 35:15, 16.
      (*e*) Therefore all wise men must condemn Job; 34:34–37.
3. A poem on kings; 36:7bc; 34:28–33; 36:8 9, 10b, 11–13.
4. A psalm on a thunderstorm; 36:26, 27b, 28a, 29–32; 37:2–4a, 11, 12ab, 13.
5. Later glosses; 32:2b, 3b, 4, 5, 17b; 34:25.

V. Jehovah's address and the final colloquy between Jehovah and Job; 38:1–42:6.
1. The great address of Jehovah; 38:1–40:2.
   (1) Jehovah challenges Job's attention; 38:1–3.

- (2) He asks whether Job had anything to do with the laying of the earth's foundations; 38: 4–15.
- (3) Does Job know the secrets of light, darkness, snow, hail, and the various mysteries of nature? 38: 16–30.
- (4) Does Job control the constellations? 38: 31–38.
- (5) Does Job care for or control the various wild animals? 38: 39–39: 30.
  - (*a*) Does he find prey for the lions? 38: 39–41.
  - (*b*) Does he control the calving of wild goats and deer? 39: 1–4.
  - (*c*) Did he give the wild ass his freedom? 39: 5–8.
  - (*d*) Can he make the wild-ox his servant? 39: 9–12.
  - (*e*) God has given the ostrich her peculiar qualities; 39: 13–18.
  - (*f*) Has Job given the horse his noble qualities? 39: 19–25.
  - (*g*) Do the hawk and eagle soar by Job's wisdom? 39: 26–30.
- (6) Jehovah challenges Job to answer; 40: 1, 2.

2. Job declines to reply; ch. 40: 3–5.
3. Jehovah asks Job to compare his power with God's, 40: 6, 9–14. (40: 7, 8 are a gloss.)
4. The interpolation concerning the hippopotamus and crocodile; 40: 15–41: 34. Not a part of the original work.
   - (1) Description of behemoth or the hippopotamus; 40: 15–24.
   - (2) Description of leviathan or the crocodile; ch. 41.
5. Job's final reply and penitent submission; 42: 1, 2, 3b, 5, 6. (42: 3a and 4 are later glosses.)

VI. The Epilogue; 42 : 7–17.
  1. Job was healed as he made intercession for his friends; 42 : 7–10.
  2. Job's friends visit and comfort him; 42 : 11.
  3. The material blessings which attended Job's later years; 42 : 12–17.

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The More Important Abbreviations

Aq.	Aquila's Version.
Ar.	Arabic Version.
Eth.	Ethiopic Version.
Gr.	Septuagint Version.
Heb.	Hebrew.
m.	Margin of Revised Version.
OLat.	Old Latin Version.
RV	Revised Version.
Sah.	Sahidic (Egyptian) Version.
Sym.	Version of Symmachus.
Syr.	Syriac Version.
Syr. Hex. . . .	Hexaplar Syriac.
SV	American Standard Version.
Targ.	Targum (Jewish Aramaic Version).
Theod. or Th. . .	Version of Theodotion.
Vulg.	Latin Vulgate.

THE BOOK OF JOB

I. The Prologue, Chs. 1, 2

1. *Job, his Station, Character, and Family*, 1 : 1–5

1. There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was
[1] Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one
2. that feared God, and eschewed [2] evil. And there

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[1] m. Heb. *Iyob.*

[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *every evil deed.*

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1. **Uz.** It is clear from v. 3 (" this man was the greatest of all the children of the east ") that Uz lay to the east of Palestine. In the genealogies of Genesis, in which tribes and lands are personified as men, the references to Uz are not altogether consistent. Gen. 10 : 23 assigns it to the Aramæans, by making Uz a son of Aram; Gen. 22 : 21 accomplishes the same result by making Uz a son of Nahor, Abraham's brother; while Gen. 36 : 28 makes Uz a son of Seir, *i.e.* Edom. This last view seems to be confirmed by Lam. 4 : 21. Gen. 10 : 23 and 22 : 21 point to a locality to the northeast of western Palestine, possibly as far away as the Euphrates, while Gen. 36 : 28 and Lam. 4 : 21 indicate a locality in or near Edom. Perhaps Jer. 25 : 20 refers to the same locality, though some think Jeremiah placed Uz between Egypt and Philistia. Evidence from outside the canonical text is in like manner divided between these localities. Shalmeneser II (860–825 B.C.) received tribute from Sasi, the Uzzite. From the context it appears that this Uz lay somewhere between the Euphrates and Lebanon. This accords with the genealogy of Gen. 22. Josephus (*Antiquities*, I, 6 : 4), says that " of the four sons of Aram Uz founded Trachonitis and Damascus." He probably thought of Uz, then, as lying to the east or northeast of the Sea of Galilee and not so far away as the Euphrates. Several modern travellers have called attention to traditions of Job which still survive in this region. In little villages around Nawâ, which lies about twenty miles east of the north end of the Sea of Galilee, various ruins are named after Job, the tombs of Job and his wife are shown,

were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.
3. His [1] substance also was seven thousand sheep,
and three thousand camels, and five hundred

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[1] m. Or *cattle.*

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and in the same region there is a place called the "Threshing-floor of Uz" (cf. Ewing, *Arab and Druze at Home*, pp. 17–19, and Schumacher, *Across the Jordan*, p. 179). Traditions concerning Job abound in this region and are probably a survival of traditions which through Josephus we can trace back to Gen. 10.

On the other hand an addition to the last chapter of Job which is found in the Greek, Sahidic, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions (see note on 42:17), and which is older than the Christian era, places Uz "on the borders of Edom and Arabia." This view is a survival of that reflected in Gen. 36 and Lamentations. Some scholars find a confirmation of this view in that the name Uz seems to be identical with the name of an old Arabian deity. Some have thought that Uz must have lain as far to the east as the Uz of Shalmeneser, for it is said in the Hebrew of v. 17 that the Chaldæans fell upon Job's camels. We learn, however, from Eze. 21:20 ff., that the Chaldæan king of Babylon had marched into the region east of the Jordan to attack Rabbah Ammon, and such a fact would justify this feature of the folk tale even if Uz lay in the Hauran or to the east of Edom. The original text, however, made no reference to the Chaldæans (see note on 1:17). Probably the story originally referred to the localities in the Hauran, where we have the "Threshing-floor of Uz," and the villages of Naemeh and Tema. From these last Eliphaz and Zophar came (see notes on 2:11). As the story became popular the stage on which it was enacted was in thought enlarged. **Job.** We learn from Eze. 14:14 that Job was the name of a patriarch or hero, noted for his righteousness. Ezekiel associates him with Noah as an example of a remarkably upright man. **Perfect.** Not sinless, but blameless is the idea implied. **Eschewed,** *i.e.* "shunned" or "avoided."

2. **Seven sons and three daughters.** Both three and seven were mystic or sacred numbers not only in Israel but throughout the world. See 2 Sam. 24:13; 1 Kgs. 17:21; Dan. 6:10; also Gen. 7:2; 21:28–30; 1 Kgs. 18:43; etc. These numbers run through the enumeration of the herds of Job in v. 3. Apparently these numbers are due to the elaboration of the folk tale.

3. **Sheep . . . camels . . . oxen . . . asses.** These are to this day the chief form of wealth for a great Emir of that part of

yoke of oxen, and five hundred [1] she-asses, and a
very great household [2]; so that this man was the
4. greatest of all the children of the east. And his
sons went and held a feast in the house of each
one upon his day; and they sent and called for
5. their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And
it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone
about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up
early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings

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[1] Gr. Sah. *she grazing asses.* [2] The Gr. Sah. Eth. add *and he had great works in the land.*

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the East. The numbers are not intended to be strictly accurate. They are symbolical, implying that the wealth of Job was complete and sufficient. They are due to the idealizing, half-poetizing form of the folk tale. **Household.** The Heb. word implies a household of servants. **Greatest.** Greatest in wealth, *i.e.* the richest.

4. **House of each one upon his day.** *I.e.* in the house of each in turn. The sons seem to have had houses of their own, although it does not appear from the story that any of them were married. The sisters lived at the home of Job. The statement implies that each brother made a feast at his house on successive days of the week to which the sisters were invited. When the week was finished, Job offered a sacrifice on their behalf. It is implied that their life was a continual feast. We are not here in contact with actual history. The tale has been shaped by the popular fancy as to the enjoyments of the rich.

5. **Sent and sanctified them.** Probably this means he sent for them to come and sanctify themselves for the sacrificial ceremony. The sanctification consisted of washings and a change of clothing. The every-day garments of secular occupations were laid aside and clothing worn on religious occasions substituted. See Gen. 35: 2; 1 Sam. 16: 5. **Offered burnt offerings.** As among the primitive Semites the father is here the priest of the family, offering the sacrifice himself. The whole idea of the efficacy of sacrifice belongs to a stage of thought more crude than the poem itself, though the belief in the necessity of sacrifice survived long after the age of the poet. It was thought in primitive times that God could thus be appeased for ceremonial transgressions of which the individual was ignorant (see Lev. 4). From this the

according to the number of them all[1]: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and [2] renounced God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth, add *even one calf for a sin offering for their souls.* [2] m. Or *blasphemed.*

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inference was drawn that God could be moved by sacrifice to forgive or overlook conscious sins of one's spirit or will. The story represents Job as holding this latter view. The burnt offering had, however, no connection with Lev. 4. It was for sins. It was all given to God. The worshipper ate none of it. **Number of them all.** Probably this means ten burnt offerings, one for each child including the daughters. If it meant seven, one for each son, as some have supposed, the word *all* would hardly have been added. **My sons have sinned.** The word rendered " sons " is in the plural equivalent to " children."

Renounced God. The Hebrew word here used means " bless." It is clearly a euphemism for curse. Some scholars think that, as it was used in salutations and in formulæ of farewell (see 1 Sam. 25: 14; Gen. 47: 7, 10), and is so used in the East to this day, it at times acquired the significance of "bid adieu to," or "renounce," but there is no trace elsewhere of such a meaning. **Thus did Job continually.** Job appears to have desired his children to enjoy innocent pleasures suitable to their years, even though such pleasures no longer appealed to him. He was not present at their feasts, and feared that under the stimulus of wine they might have said some word to offend God or that they might actually renounce him. He accordingly permitted the feasts to go on, but offered sin-offerings for them. Renunciation of God, the sin to which he feared his children might be led by life's joys, is just the sin to which Job's sufferings almost drove him.

In order to explain the misfortunes which overtook Job, the reader is now transferred to the court of Jehovah, and a scene there is described to him. The conceptions which underlie this scene belong to a fairly primitive stratum of thought. There is nothing quite like it in the Old Testament, except in 1 Kgs. 22, where the conceptions expressed are more primitive than those revealed here. In both passages Jehovah is pictured as a king of spiritual beings who has times of counselling with the spirits who are subordinate to him. In Job he has certain court days when the subordinate spirits come to pay their respects to him. The scene which is the theme of vs. 6–12 occurred on such a day.

2. *The Heavenly Conference at which the Trials of Job are Ordained,* 1:6–12

6. Now there was a day when [1] the sons of God came
to present themselves before the LORD, and [2] Satan
7. came also among them. And the LORD said unto
Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the angels.* [2] m. That is, *the Adversary.*

6. **Now there was a day.** *I.e.* the regular day for such an assemblage of heavenly beings in Jehovah's presence as is described in the following verses. **When the sons of God.** This means beings of the divine order, who belonged in contrast to mortals to the same class as Jehovah himself. Such beings are mentioned in Gen. 6:2; Ps. 29:1; and according to the Gr. in Deut. 32:8. For a long time Israelites, although recognizing that they ought to worship, when in Palestine, Jehovah only, believed in the reality of other deities (see Ex. 20:3; 1 Sam. 26:19; and Micah 4:5). Jeremiah (14:22) was the first to declare that such deities were mere nothings, and his view was, perhaps, never accepted by all. More believed that such beings became subject to Jehovah and became his messengers or angels. Three of the ancient versions actually so translate the words here. The conception of the passage before us is on the borderland between real deities and angels. These "sons of God" are pictured as Jehovah's nobles or courtiers rather than his mere messengers. They are thought to hold to him much the same relation that the nobles of a kingdom hold to their monarch. **Satan came also.** This is one of the three passages in the Old Testament in which the name Satan occurs. The others are Zech. 3:2 and 1 Chr. 21:1. In the earlier time the Hebrews thought Jehovah did everything both good and evil. Amos, *e.g.*, says (3:6), "can an evil befall a city and Jehovah not have done it?" The development of Satan in Hebrew religious thought belongs to the time after the exile (cf. 1 Chr. 21:1 with 2 Sam. 24:1). The Satan of this book is a less developed adversary than the one in Zechariah or Chronicles. He is still one of the divine beings, a member of Jehovah's heavenly court, and comes like the other angels to the gatherings of heavenly beings to pay his respects to his sovereign. He is pictured as a kind of disgruntled angel, who has lost his belief in human virtue; he has become cynical, and holds that every man has his price.

the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the
8. earth,[1] and from walking up and down in it. And
the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered
my servant Job? [2] for there is none like him in
the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that
9. feareth God, and escheweth [3] evil. Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for
10. nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him,
and about his house, and about all that he hath, on
every side? thou hast blessed the [4] work of his hands,
11. and his [5] substance is increased in the land. But
put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he
12. hath, and [6] he will renounce thee to thy face. And
the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath

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[1] Targ. adds *to examine the work of the children of men.* [2] m. Or *that.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *every evil deed.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. Targ. *works.* [5] m. *cattle.* [6] Heb. *he will bless thee.*

7. **Going to and fro in the earth.** This implies that Satan had been using his opportunities to observe the ways and the characters of men.

8. **Hast thou considered?** The Lord calls Satan's attention to Job as to a conspicuous example of virtue, in order that by this means Satan's cynical estimate of men may be dispelled and he may be restored to a healthy attitude of mind. **Escheweth evil.** *I.e.* turns away from or avoids evil.

9. **Doth Job fear God for naught?** Satan has noticed Job, but he considers that Job is so prosperous in his virtue that that virtue never has been tested. Job's integrity and uprightness, accordingly, are to Satan's mind no proof that Job does not like other men have his price.

10. **Hast thou not made an hedge about him?** This and the words which follow set forth strikingly the greatness of Job's possessions, and how absolutely free he is from attack.

11. **Touch all that he hath.** *I.e.* touch any of his possessions. Touch is used in the sense of *injure* or *remove.* **Renounce.** The Hebrew uses again the euphemism *bless.* The idea conveyed is "he will curse thee."

12. **All that he hath is in thy power.** In order to convince Satan that he is wrong in his suspicion of Job's disinterested

is in thy [1] power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

3. *The First Series of Disasters*, 1:13–19

13. And it fell on a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest
14. brother's house, that there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses
15. feeding beside them: and [2] the Sabeans fell *upon*

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[1] Heb. *hand*. [2] m. Heb. *Sheba*. Gr. Sah. Eth. by the change of one letter read *those who take captives*, i.e. *raiders*.

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virtue, Jehovah gave Job's possessions into Satan's power. He thus permitted Satan, according to this story, to experiment on Job. The object is clearly in order to reclaim Satan. In Isa. 40–55 the great doctrine is set forth that Israel suffered in order to bring the world to Jehovah; this writer represents Job as suffering in order that God may win back an angel who is on the downward road. **Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.** In this first experiment only Job's possessions were to be touched. Jehovah measures each of Job's afflictions by the gauge of Satan's sneer.

13. **It fell.** *I.e.* it happened.

14. **The oxen were ploughing.** Ploughing can only be done in that country in the winter, *i.e.* the rainy season, after the moisture has softened the soil. This calamity, therefore, happened in winter.

15. **The Sabeans.** The men of Saba, a city in the southwest part of the Arabian peninsula. Gen. 10:7 and 28, also 25:3, mention it among the clans of the Arabs. According to 1 Kgs. 10 the queen of this city visited Solomon. From numerous inscriptions brought in recent years from South Arabia, it appears that Saba became an independent kingdom about 500 B.C. Before that time it had been for some 250 years subject to the neighboring city of Main. During this period its rulers were called *Mukarribs*. In the year 715 B.C. Sargon, king of Assyria, sent a military expedition into the Arabian desert and among others received tribute from Yathamar, Mukarrib of Saba. Accord-

them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the
[1] servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am
16. escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet
speaking, there came also another, and said, The
[2] fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath
burned up the sheep, and the [3] servants, and
consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell
17. thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also
another, and said, [4] The Chaldeans made three bands,

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[1] m. Heb. *young men.* [2] Sah. Eth. *fire from heaven.* [3] Heb. *young men;* Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. *shepherds.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *horsemen.*

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ing to Job 6: 19 caravans from Saba penetrated the northern deserts. If these were Sabeans, they were probably members of such a caravan. The Gr. Sah. and Eth Versions by the change of one letter make the destroyers of Job's oxen and asses raiders whose habitat is not defined. **They have slain the servants.** Probably the servants, like the Bedu to-day, were armed and showed fight. If the attacking party tried to steal some of Job's animals and the servants resisted, it would account for the slaughter. The Arabs seldom shed blood unless attacked.

16. **The fire of God.** *I.e.* lightning. Since thunder-storms occur there in winter only, this is another indication that these misfortunes occurred at that season.

17. **The Chaldeans.** These were a Semitic people who made their appearance in southern Babylonia about 1000 B.C. and played an important rôle in the history of that country for five hundred years. One of their number, Merodach-Baladan (cf. 2 Kgs. 20: 12 and Isa. 39: 1), made much trouble for the Assyrian kings Sargon and Sennacherib. He fomented many rebellions against them and tried to draw Hezekiah of Judah into his plans. In 625 B.C. Nabopolassar, a Chaldean, became king of Babylon, which was thus ruled by Chaldeans till it was conquered by Cyrus in 538. Under Nabopolassar's son Nebuchadnezzar many campaigns were sent into Palestine (cf. 2 Kgs. 24 and 25; Jer. 46; Eze. 21: 25; and 29: 17 ff.). These campaigns made the Chaldeans very well known in the West. Three ancient versions read "horsemen" instead of Chaldeans here, and perhaps in the original narrative the Chaldeans did not appear. Horsemen in Hebrew could easily be corrupted into Chaldeans. **Made three bands.** So as to hem the camels in on three sides and pre-

and [1] fell upon the camels, and have taken them away, yea, and slain the [2] servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19. and, behold, there came a great wind [3] from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

4. *Job's Demeanor under these Misfortunes*, 1:20–22

20. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and wor-

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[1] m. Or *made a raid*. [2] m. Heb. *young men*. [3] m. Or *over*.

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vent their escape, except in the direction that they wished them to go. The camel is easily frightened, and when alarmed runs in any direction that he can. Attacking on three sides was, however, common in Oriental raids; see Jud. 7:16; 9:43; 1 Sam. 11:11.

19. **A great wind from the wilderness.** That is, an east wind from across the great eastern desert. Such winds were especially strong, see Jer. 13:27; but this one must have been a whirlwind or cyclone. **The young men.** This must be understood as *the young people*, for it must have included the daughters also. Thus with the death of his children the desolation of his prosperous estate was completed. In three swiftly succeeding blows all had been swept away.

20. **Rent his mantle.** Not a mantle, but an outer garment worn over the tunic. The tunic was worn next the skin, and this outer garment completed the toilet. In early times it was made of linen, later of cotton. It had sleeves and reached to the ankles. Such garments were worn by Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:4; 24:5, 12) and by "princes of the sea" (Eze. 26:16). They were also worn by women of high rank (2 Sam. 13:18). They might be ornamented in various colors (Gen. 37:3). To rend one's garment was a token of grief; see Gen. 37:29 and 34; 44:13; 2 Sam. 13:19; and Joel 2:13. **Shaved his head.**

21. shipped; and he said, Naked came I out of my
mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither:
the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away;
22. blessed be the name of the LORD. [1] In all this Job
sinned not, nor charged God with foolishness.

5. *The Second Heavenly Conference*, 2 : 1–6

2. Again there was a day when the sons of God came
[2] to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan
came also among them to present himself before the
2. LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence
comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and
said, From going to and fro in the earth, [3] and from
3. walking up and down in it. And the LORD said

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *In all these things which happened to him.*

[2] Some Gr. MSS., also Aq. Th. Sah. Eth., omit *to present themselves before the Lord.*

[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *and walking up and down everywhere am I come.*

This was among the Hebrews, as among many other comparatively primitive peoples, a sign of mourning, see Jer. 16 : 6, Eze. 7 : 18; Amos 8 : 10. It is prohibited in Deut. 14 : 1. This prohibition seems not to have been observed. Its existence, however, proves that the custom had been practised. Lev. 21 : 5 forbids the high priest to shave his head as a sign of mourning for his relatives, implying that others might do so. Among the Arabs the custom seems to be practised by women only. **And worshipped.** In token of his profound submission to God.

21. **Naked shall I return thither.** The thought is plain, though the language is inexact. "Came I out of my mother's womb" must be literal, but "naked shall I return thither" must be a figurative expression for death. **Blessed be the name of the Lord.** Instead of cursing God as Satan had predicted, Job submits to the inscrutable affliction with words of blessing.

22. **Nor charged God with foolishness.** Better: "he did not ascribe unseemliness to God."

1. **Again there was a day.** The folk tale pictured Jehovah as having, like an earthly king, certain days on which his nobles gathered about him.

unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job?
[1] for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and
an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth
evil: and he still holdeth fast his integrity, although
though movedst me against him, [2] to destroy him
4. without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and
said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he
5. give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and
touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce thee
6. to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold,
he is in thine hand; only spare his life.

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[3] m. Or, *that.*

[4] Heb. *to swallow him up.*

3. **Hast thou considered my servant Job?** Satan did not refer to his experiment upon Job until questioned about it. He was not eager to confess failure. **Holdeth fast his integrity.** Satan's prediction as to what Job would do had been signally falsified. **Escheweth evil.** *I.e.* "turns away from," or "avoids evil."

4. **Skin for skin.** The expression is apparently proverbial. It is obscure in meaning, and various interpretations have been suggested for it. The most probable of these is "the skin of another will a man give for his own." Perhaps it was a proverb among the Bedu; they may have threatened a shepherd by telling him that he must give the skins of his flock in order to save his own. In any case the saying is quoted here to imply that Job was willing to sacrifice the skins of all his herds and even of his children to save his own. Satan is not convinced of Job's integrity. According to his view his prediction concerning Job has failed only because of the limitation put upon Satan's test of him. He was not permitted to touch Job closely enough.

5. **Touch his bone and his flesh.** A Hebrew idiom for "his person." This clause vouches for the general correctness of our interpretation of the preceding verse. **He will renounce thee to thy face.** The Heb. here, as in 1:11, is "will bless thee to thy face." "Bless," as before, is used euphemistically for "curse."

6. **Behold, he is in thine hand; only spare his life.** Once more Jehovah, for the sake of reclaiming Satan and restoring his faith in the reality of disinterested virtue, accepts Satan's conditions, and allows him to test Job by afflicting his body. The one limitation is that Job's life shall be spared.

6. *The Second Test and its Outcome,* 2 : 7–10

7. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD,
and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his
8. foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd
to scrape himself withal; and he sat among the ashes.

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[1] Gr. Th. Sah. Eth. *to scrape away the ichor.*

7. **Sore boils from the sole of his foot to his crown.** Many opinions have been entertained as to the nature of the disease with which Job was afflicted. The folk tale tells us that the whole body was covered with sores, including even the face, which was so disfigured that his friends did not recognize him (2 : 12). These sores emitted pus which formed scabs, that could be scraped off with a bit of potsherd (v. 8). Possibly this scraping was to allay the itching; some have thought that it was to allay this that he sat in ashes. The poet adds the following details: from pain Job groaned continually (3 : 24), his nerves were unstrung (3 : 25), he felt as though burned with a fiery poison (6 : 4), his sores were infested with maggots (7 : 5, compare also the addition to 2 : 9 in the Gr. Sah. and Eth.), and his breath was fetid (19 : 17). Origen thought he had leprosy; Kimchi, the mediæval Jewish scholar, the form of leprosy called Elephantiasis; others have suggested smallpox, a kind of boil known as "Aleppo button" or "Baghdad date" and *ecthyma.* In some respects the description in the text does not conform to the symptoms of any one of these. Probably it is hopeless now to try to identify the malady from which Job suffered. Even in the folk tale which the poet adopted as the background for his work the symptoms of some real disease were loosely described and heightened as in all popular descriptions of sickness, and the touches which the poet has added were probably added from his observation of what would be likely in such diseases, and are not first-hand information as to the symptoms of this particular patient. It appears, then, that we cannot now tell the exact nature of Job's malady.

8. **A potsherd to scrape himself.** As suggested above, either to remove the scabs, or to allay the itching. **He sat among the ashes.** Possibly to allay the itching, but more probably in token of his desolate condition, since sitting in ashes was a sign of grief. See Esth. 4 : 1; Isa. 58 : 5; Jer. 6 : 26; Jonah 3 : 6.

9. [1] Then said his wife unto him, [2] Dost thou still hold
10. fast thine integrity? [3] renounce God, and die. [4] But
he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the [5] foolish
women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at
the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? [6] In
all this did not Job sin with his lips.[7]

7. *The Coming of Job's Three Friends*, 2:11–13

11. Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil
that was come upon him, they came every one from

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *After much time had passed his wife said to him.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *How long will thou be steadfast, saying: Behold I will wait a little time expecting the hope of my salvation? For behold thy memorial has perished from the earth — thy sons and daughters, the labors and pangs of my womb, whom in vain I bore with pains. Thou sitting in the corruption of worms passing the night in the open air, while I even as a hired slave wander from place to place and from house to house, longing for the setting of the sun, that I may rest from the hardships and toils which now encompass me.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *but say a certain word unto the Lord and die.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *But looking up he said.* [5] m. Or, *impious.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *In all the things which happened to him.* [7] Targ. adds, *but Job thought things in his heart.*

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9. **Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity?** Job's wife was with Job, and not with the children at the feast, so she naturally escaped. Some ancient editor, as the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions show (see the addition from them given above), felt that the question of Job's wife is altogether too brief to express the feelings of a bereaved and loquacious woman; he therefore inserted an addition to the text for the purpose of supplying what he felt to be an artistic defect in the form of the story. **Renounce God and die.** Even the wife in her despair became an unconscious ally of Satan.

10. **Foolish.** We should read, as the margin does, "impious." In the wisdom literature impiety is folly, and folly impiety. **Shall we not receive evil?** The point of view is kindred to that of Amos 3:6. God does everything, both good and evil. On any monotheistic view of the world, however, God must either do or permit all that is done. Job's phrase accordingly becomes a classic expression of resignation to the will of God. **Sinned not with his lips.** The writer does not intend to imply that he sinned in thought. The addition of the Targum, "but Job thought things in his heart," while true for most men under these conditions, is foreign to the thought of the tale, which pictured Job as an example of resignation.

his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the [1] Naamathite: and they

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[1] Gr. *the Minæan.*

11. **Eliphaz the Temanite.** In Gen. 36 : 11 the Priestly writer represents both Eliphaz and Teman as clans or districts in Edom. Teman appears elsewhere in the Old Testament as a district of Edom famed for its wisdom (see Jer. 49 : 7, and Baruch 3 : 22) or as the most important town of Edom; see Amos 1 : 12; Eze. 25 : 13; Hab. 3 : 3; and Obad. 9. Most commentators have taken this town to be the home of Job's friend Eliphaz. If Uz lay in the Hauran, Teman may originally have been Tema, a village which lies in the northern end of Gebel-ed-Druz some two days' journey to the east of the "Threshing-floor of Uz" mentioned above (see note on 1 : 1). If this were so, it would be natural that in later times it should have been confused with the better-known Teman in Edom. That there was a tendency to magnify the importance of Job and his friends as time went on is shown by the fact that in the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions Eliphaz is represented as king of Teman. **Bildad the Shuhite.** "The Shuhite" is usually supposed to be a man from the city of Suhu. This was an Aramæan city on the Euphrates. With the inhabitants of this city Tiglathpileser I, about 1100 B.C., and Assurnasirpal, 880 B.C. (both kings of Assyria), came into conflict. In Gen. 25 : 2 Shuah is said to be one of the sons of Keturah, and recent commentators think that this statement refers to the city on the Euphrates. It is possible that originally some obscure place in the Hauran near to the "Threshing-floor of Uz" was intended, and that, when the obscure Tema of that region was thought to be Teman, Shuah was identified with the more famous place upon the Euphrates. Wetzstein identifies it with Es-Suweda on the western slope of Gebel-ed-Druz. The Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions represent Bildad as the "Tyrant of Shuah." **The Naamathite.** The only Biblical city the name of which corresponds to this is Naamah, Josh. 15 : 41, the modern Naaneh, a wretched mud village on the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, but all scholars have realized that this could not be the village referred to. Probably the reference originally intended was to a village in the Hauran still called Naemeh, which is within about a day's journey from the "Threshing-floor of Uz." Later, when it had become customary to think of Eliphaz as a king of a part of Edom and of Bildad as tyrant of distant Suhu on the Euphrates, Naemeh was transformed into Main, a city of South Arabia, by the transposition of two Hebrew

made an appointment together to come to bemoan
12. him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up
their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up
their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his
mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads [1] toward
13. heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground
seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word
unto him: for they saw that his [2] grief was very great.

II. Job's Wail of Despair, Ch. 3

1. *Would God I had never been conceived or born*, 3: 1–10

3. After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his
2. day. [3] And Job answered and said:

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *toward heaven*. m. [2] Or *pain*. [3] Gr. Sah. Vulg. Ar. Eth. read only *And he said*.

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letters. Thus the Greek and Sahidic versions call Zophar "king of Main." Main was an older city than Saba, the Biblical Sheba, and was equally famous with it. It was brought into the story of Job by that natural tendency to enlarge the area over which Job's fame spread and to glorify him by magnifying the rank of his friends, which as time went on was the natural result of the fame that the popularity, first of the story, and later of the poem, gave him. **To bemoan him and to comfort him.** There are misfortunes which it is beyond human power to remedy, but even these are mitigated by human sympathy. By the "sympathizing tear" of others many a sufferer has found courage to play the man.

12. **Lifted up their voice, and wept.** Orientals are very expressive and manifest in dramatic ways either sorrow or joy. Weeping, rending of garments, and putting earth on one's head are customary ways with them of expressing grief; see Josh. 7:6; 1 Sam. 4:12; and Lam. 2:10.

13. **None spake a word unto him.** A beautiful touch. Often grief is too deep to be reached by mere words. Silent, patient sympathy and tears are far more expressive. The author and the transmitters of this story had sounded the depths of grief and learned the limitations of words.

1. **After this.** That is, after the silence of Job's friends. It is at this point that the poet breaks away from the folk tale

3. Let the day perish wherein I was born,
And the night [1] which said, [2] There is a man child conceived.
4. Let [3] that day be darkness;
Let not God [4] regard it from above,
Neither let the light shine upon it.
5. Let darkness and [5] the shadow of death claim it for their own;
Let a cloud dwell upon it;

and begins his great discussion of the problem of suffering. In order to make the connection he allows two sentences of prose to stand before the poem begins. **Cursed his day.** The day of his birth, as the following verses show. This curse is the wild, half-delirious outcry of a man beside himself with suffering. The poet reveals rare poetic genius in the way he has portrayed the reckless utterances of one wild with pain from whom weakness has taken the power of self-control.

3. **Let the day perish.** We should read as the Gr., Sah., and Eth. versions suggest:

"Perish the day in which I was born,
And the night when they said, 'It's a boy'!"

The reference is clearly to the night of Job's birth, and not to his conception. "It's a boy" is a quotation from the report of the midwife on that night.

4. **Let that day be darkness.** Each day was supposed to have a permanent existence and a definite character. The day of Job's birth, although it had long passed, came around each year in the troop of the days, bringing with it its own malign character. In the East to this day a curse is not simply an angry expression by which one relieves his feelings, but is regarded as a kind of permanent entity charged with energy for its own accomplishment. What follows presupposes these two considerations. **Regard it.** The Hebrew means rather "seek it out."

5. **The shadow of death.** Rather "deep darkness." **Let all that maketh black.** The expression in the Hebrew is an unusual one and greatly puzzled the ancient translators, as the quotations from the versions made above show. Perhaps we should trans-

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[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Targ. Ar. Eth. *in which it was said.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Behold, a male;* Syr. *A man is conceived.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *that night.* [4] m. Or *inquire after.* [5] m. Or *deep darkness* (and so elsewhere).

[1] Let all that maketh black the day terrify it.
6. As for that night, let thick darkness seize upon it:
[2] Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
Let it not come into the number of the months.
7. [3] Lo, let that night be [4] barren;
Let no joyful voice come therein.
8. Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are [5] ready to rouse up leviathan.
9. Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark:

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *May the day be cursed!* Syr. *May the bitter of days terrify it!* Vulg. *and be involved in bitterness.* Aq. Targ. *May they terrify it like the bitter of days!*

[2] m. Some ancient versions read *be joined unto.*

[3] Gr. Sah. *But.* Syr. Vulg. Ar. Eth. omit.

[4] m. Or *solitary.*

[5] m. Or *skilful.*

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late: "May the deep gloom of day." **Terrify it.** So that it shall fear to reappear every year.

6. **Among the days of the year.** According to the ideas mentioned in the note on v. 4, Job hopes that his curse will erase this day from the calendar, so that it will not continually recur with each revolving year.

7. **Be barren.** Job does not wish it to do to another, by bringing another life into the world, the wrong it did him. **No joyful voice.** No birthday rejoicing.

8. **Who are ready.** "Ready" in the sense that they have the skill to do it. **Leviathan.** Literally, the "twister" or "coiler," was primarily a name for a mythological serpent or dragon that could darken the sun. It is in Isa. 27: 1 and Ps. 74: 13 and 14 connected with the sea. Scholars have for some years recognized that this mythological dragon, which is in the Old Testament frequently called *Rahab* also (see Job 9: 13; 26: 12 and 13; Ps. 89: 10), is a popular adaptation of the dragon Tiamat of the Babylonian Creation Epic. Tiamat was the dragon of the primeval abyss who attempted to overcome all the beneficent gods, and who fought a great battle with Marduk, the god of light. Although Marduk overcame her, she became the symbol of the sun-darkener. Enchanters were supposed to have the power of arousing her, so that she should darken the sun, or of quieting her. This would accomplish for the day of Job's birth just what he wished, and is clearly the reference here. The name of this mythical monster, Leviathan, was sometimes applied figuratively to the whale, as in Ps. 104: 25 and 26; and sometimes to the crocodile, as in Job 41.

Let it look for light, but have none;
Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning:
10. Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb,
Nor hid trouble from mine eyes.

2 *Would God I had died at birth*, 3: 11–19

11. Why died I not [1] from the womb?
Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?
12. Why did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should suck?
13. For now should I have lien down and been quiet;
I should have slept; then had I been at rest:

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[1] Gr. Eth. *in the womb.*

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9. **The eyelids of the morning.** A beautiful poetic figure. Possibly it refers to a dawn myth in which the dawn was thought of as a beautiful woman. Thus we have in Isa. 14: 12, "O day star, son of the Dawn."

10. **Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb.** This verse gives the reason why Job has uttered the preceding curses; it was because his birth, which exposed him to all his present suffering, had not been prevented. The day is vividly personified in the expression *it shut not up*, and there is poetically attributed to it a power that belongs only to God.

11. **Why died I not from the womb?** As the wish of the preceding verses that Job had never been born could not be fulfilled, he next asks why he could not have died from birth.

12. **Why did the knees receive me?** The child was laid at birth upon the knees of the father, who had the right of acknowledging it his and of stating whether he would become responsible for its maintenance, see Gen. 50: 23. The same was true at times of a foster mother, see Gen. 30: 3. **Why the breasts, that I should suck?** In Job's despair these acts of kindness in his unconscious infancy by which he had been kept alive are for the moment regarded as personal injuries. He holds those who performed them responsible for his present sufferings.

14. With kings and counsellors of the earth,
Which [1] built up waste places for themselves;
15. Or with princes that had gold,
Who filled their houses with silver:
16. Or as an [2] hidden untimely birth I had not been;
As infants which never saw light.

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[1] m. Or *built solitary places.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *who were upborne on swords.*
[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *coming forth.*

14. **With kings and counsellors.** Death is the great leveller. The unknown man and the nameless child rest in death with kings. This thought finds expression in Isa. 14:9; Eze. 32:29 and 31. Bryant in his *Thanatopsis* has expressed the same thought:

> "Thou shalt lie down
> With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings,
> The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
> Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
> All in one mighty sepulchre."

Built up waste places for themselves. This is an obscure expression, and the text is, perhaps, corrupt. Some of the ancient versions read "swords" instead of "waste places," but such a reading is manifestly inappropriate to the context. The word rendered "waste places" is used often in the Old Testament for ruined cities, see Isa. 58:12; 61:4; Eze. 36:10 and 33; Mal. 1:4. Since one monarch was apt to let cities built by his predecessors fall into ruins, some have thought that the meaning here is "who built cities which are now in ruins." Since the Hebrew word has a general resemblance to the Coptic and Arabic word for *pyramids* some have supposed that we should render here: "who built for themselves pyramids." Cheyne would amend the text so as to read "who built everlasting sepulchres." In whatever way the expression is understood, it is clear that it refers to the great works of monarchs, and is parallel to the

> "princes that had gold,
> And filled their houses with silver"

of v. 15.

16. **Hidden untimely birth.** The present text is appropriate in that a child born dead is "hidden" or buried at once out of sight. For sentiments similar to those of this verse see Jer. 20:18; Eccl. 4:2 and 3; 6:3; 7:1.

17. There the wicked cease from [1] troubling;
And there the weary be at rest.
18. There the prisoners are at ease together;
They hear not the voice of the taskmaster.
19. The small and great are there;
And the servant is free from his master.

3. *Why do those who in Wretchedness long for Death continue to Live?* 3 : 20–26

20. Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,
And life unto the bitter in soul;

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[1] m. *raging.*

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17. **Troubling.** The Hebrew word means "raging." It may mean "troubling others," or it may refer to the effect of the wicked's own restlessness upon themselves. The last is probably the reference here. **The weary be at rest.** The unbroken calm of Sheol seems to Job in comparison with his present suffering more desirable than anything else.

18. **Prisoners.** Rather "captives," who are forced as slaves to labor for foreign masters, or on public work for the king. **Taskmaster.** See Ex. 3 : 7. He was the counterpart of the "overseer" who in the days of American slavery goaded the slave to his utmost exertions.

19. **The servant is free from his master.** The inequalities of earth vanish in Sheol. Death is the great leveller. Small and great are there on an equality. In the entire lack of sensation no one is exalted above another, no one toils for another, none suffers the humiliation of subjugation, nor the restlessness of an uneasy conscience or of unfulfilled desire, nor the pains of cruel disease or bereavement. Hence Job longed for this haven.

20. **Wherefore is light given.** In contrast with the peacefulness of death the misery of life seems intolerable. The acuteness of Job's sufferings leads him to regard all life for the moment as full of agony, and a curse rather than a blessing. He puts the question at first in an impersonal way, but it is clear from v. 23 that he has God in mind. In this first wild outcry of agony, accordingly, Job charges God with cruelty — a thought that comes to the surface again and again as the discussion with his friends proceeds. **To him that is in misery.** The inquiry is made general at first, but in v. 24 it is made clear that Job is thinking of himself.

21. Which [1] long for death, but it cometh not;
And dig for it more than for hid treasures;
22. Which rejoice [2] exceedingly,
And are glad, when they can find the grave?
23. *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid,
And whom God hath hedged in?

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[1] m. Or *wait.*

[2] m. Or *unto exultation.*

21. **And dig for it more than for hid treasures.** A very vivid figure. In an old country like Palestine hoards of gold, the owners of which have long since passed away and been forgotten, are sometimes found. Such a discovery was made at Beit Degan (the ancient Beth Dagon) in the spring of 1903. Such occasional finds fire the imagination of the peasant to hope that he may be the fortunate discoverer of such a treasure. Thompson (*Land and Book*, p. 135), says: "I have heard of diggers actually fainting when they have come upon even a single coin. They become positively frantic, dig all night with desperate earnestness, and continue work till utterly exhausted. There are at this hour hundreds of persons thus engaged all over the country. Not a few spend their last farthing in these ruinous efforts." In Egypt we hear of such search for treasure seven hundred years before the time of our poet, and our poet had been in Egypt.

22. **Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?** The Hebrew text is here unusual and perhaps corrupt. The Gr. Sah. and Eth. versions read simply: "And are beside themselves for joy if they find it." This would make the comparison a tristich as follows:

> "Who long for death, and it cometh not,
> Who dig for it more than for hid treasures,
> And who are beside themselves with joy, if they find it."

This is perhaps right, though the Greek translators may have simply omitted some difficult words.

23. **Whom God hath hedged in.** Job, like many another sufferer, feels like a caged bird. There is no escape. In whatever direction he turns for relief he but beats his suffering soul against the iron bars of a God-ordained fate. His word "hedged in" is a quotation from the language of Satan in 1 : 10, only now it is the hedge of a crushing fate and not of protection. The poet has purposely made Job use the same word in this widely different sense to emphasize the contrast of his present condition in comparison with his former one.

24. For my sighing cometh [1] before I eat,
And my roarings are poured out like water.
25. For [2] the thing which I fear cometh upon me,
And that which I am afraid of cometh unto me.
26. [3] I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I rest;
But trouble cometh.

III. THE GREAT DEBATE ON THE MEANING AND CAUSE OF SUFFERING, CHS. 4–31

1. *The First Speech of Eliphaz*, Chs. 4, 5

4. Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
2. [4] If one assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?

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[1] m. Or *like my meat.* [2] m. Or *the thing which I feared is come*, etc. [3] m. Or *I was not at ease . . . yet trouble came.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. read *Has it not frequently been spoken to thee in suffering?* Aq. Sym. Th. Vulg. *If we undertake to speak with thee, wilt thou be grieved?*

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24. **Before I eat.** This gives no good meaning, and it is better to read with the margin, "like my meat."

25. **The thing which I feared.** Job here returns from general to personal statements. We should render vs. 25, 26:

"When I fear an evil, it cometh upon me,
And whatsoever I dread, it overtakes me;
I have no ease, neither quiet, nor rest,
But trouble cometh."

The poet has given a striking picture of one phase of a terrible illness — the suffering which comes from shattered nerves. It is not only what the patient suffers, but what he dreads, which forms the exquisite torture. Then the power of the mind over the body, especially in disease, to bring about a physical realization of its own fears adds greatly to the patient's difficulties. The author of this poem had been a close observer of illnesses.

(1) *The surprise of Eliphaz at Job's despair*, 4:1–11.

2. **If one assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?** "Commune" is old English for "speak." Notice the gentle,

But who can withhold himself from speaking?
3. Behold, thou hast instructed many,
And thou hast strengthened the weak hands.
4. Thy words have upholden him that was falling,
And thou hast confirmed the [1] feeble knees.

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[1] m. Heb. *bowing.*

even tender, beginning which Eliphaz makes. The friends, like Job himself, were in the dark as to why Job was thus afflicted. The reader has been let into the secret by the prologue, but not so the actors in the poem. For them the curtain of heaven had not been withdrawn, and they were left to guess at causes in a purely human way. Eliphaz and his companions fully believed that Job had been a good man, and their theology could not then account for his misfortunes. They had sat before him in dumb sympathy, but with puzzled minds. Then came Job's wild outcry: his cursing of his birth, his longing for death, his hint that God was responsible for his suffering. This greatly shocked the listeners. Job did not speak as a religious man ought to. Their theology had all through the seven days made them suspect that Job had been guilty of some terrible sin, or his terrible troubles would not have come upon him. His reckless speech confirmed this suspicion. So Eliphaz, the elder of the listeners, undertakes to comfort Job, and by correction to bring him back to views of life that accord with the orthodox notions of the divine administration. His former integrity is a ground for hope of God's forgiveness, but his sin, which is in process of punishment, must be repented of. Although Eliphaz had not the insight to see that most of that which shocked him in what Job had said was but the irresponsible utterance of a man beside himself with pain, he nevertheless had enough sympathetic insight to know that Job's condition required the most gentle and tactful handling; hence the considerate inquiry with which the verse begins. "Wilt thou be grieved?" is equivalent to, "will it be too much for thee?"

3. **Behold, thou hast instructed many.** It strikes Eliphaz as a surprise that one who has instructed others how to bear sorrow (see what Job says of himself in 29:15 and 16) should himself so completely break down under it. **Weak hands.** A sign of helplessness and despondency, see 2 Sam. 4:1 and Isa. 13:7.

4. **Feeble knees.** Read with the margin "tottering knees." The figure is of one staggering under a heavy load. Compare Isa. 35:3 and 4; Heb. 12:12.

5. But now it is come unto thee, and thou [1]faintest;
It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.
6. Is not thy fear *of God* thy confidence,
And thy hope the integrity of thy ways?
7. Remember, I pray thee, who *ever* perished, being innocent?
Or where were the upright cut off?
8. According as I have seen, they that plow iniquity,
And sow [2] trouble, reap the same.
9. By the breath of God they perish,

---

[1] m. Or *art grieved.*

[2] m. Or *mischief.*

5. **Thou faintest.** Thou hast broken down, or lost thy self-possession. Doubtless Job in comforting others had pointed out to them such aspects of divine providence and the uses of adversity in God's hands, that they were consoled. Eliphaz is surprised that such consolations do not occur to Job now. He does not mean to be sarcastic. His mood is entirely gentle and friendly. He rather wishes to recall to Job that which Job well knows.

6. **Is not thy fear of God thy confidence?** In comforting others Job had probably himself used such arguments. Eliphaz believed that Job's life had been essentially good. There might have been grave slips, but his general integrity was ground for believing that God would not utterly destroy him.

7. **Who ever perished, being innocent?** This is not said here to prove Job a sinner, but rather to encourage him. He has been on the whole a righteous man, and God will yet deliver him.

8. **As I have seen.** Eliphaz had tried this view of life in his personal experience and observation, and wished to testify that it had stood the test. **Plow iniquity, and sow trouble.** An agricultural figure forcibly indicating that they make a regular business of a life of sin (compare Hos. 10 : 13). Job had not done that. Whatever fault had brought upon him his present calamities, his life had been devoted on the whole to the business of righteousness. Hence this is mentioned for Job's encouragement. Possibly Eliphaz dwelt upon it also partly as a warning to Job, lest from this time onward he make the sin, which had already brought such havoc into his life, a regular habit.

And by the blast of his anger are they consumed.
10. The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion,
And the teeth of the [1] young lions, are broken.
11. The old lion perisheth for lack of prey,
And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad.
12. Now a thing was [2] secretly brought to me,
And mine ear received a whisper thereof.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *dragons*. [2] m. Heb. *brought by stealth*.

---

9. **The blast of his anger.** It consumes as the hot sirocco, or wind from the desert, withers vegetation. Compare Isa. 40: 7; and Amos 1: 2.

10. **The roaring of the lion.** Verses 10, 11 compare the destruction of the wicked with the breaking up of a den of lions. In the Hebrew five different words are used for different sorts of lions. The Semitic languages had numerous words by which to designate the lion. It is said that the Arabs had four hundred synonyms for him. In the attack pictured by Eliphaz the lions were not all killed, but the teeth of those fully grown were broken. No longer able to tear their prey, they perished of hunger. When the old lions had died, the whelps were scattered. As Eliphaz spoke, he either unconsciously enlarged upon a familiar theme, or else, forgetting for a moment his sympathy, is intent to deter Job from habitual sin.

(2) *Eliphaz contrasts the holiness of God with that of all creatures,* 4:12–21

12. **Now a thing was secretly brought to me.** Having sought to induce Job to regard his general integrity as a ground of hope, and having made the general statement clear that sinners only are punished, Eliphaz now seeks gently to lead Job to realize that his suffering must come from some sin in himself. Eliphaz proceeds very cautiously and with great consideration by narrating a vision or dream in which this truth was enforced upon him. The poet in the description of this dream has achieved one of the greatest of literary triumphs. He has succeeded in vividly conveying such a sense of vague horror at the impalpable and unknown that the reader feels something of the horror. Eliphaz

13. In thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falleth on men,
14. Fear came upon me, and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.
15. Then [1] a spirit passed before my face;
The hair of my flesh stood up.
16. It stood still, but I could not discern the appearance thereof;

---

[1] m. Or *a breath passed over.*

is represented as living over again the terror of his dream as he relates it, and by interesting Job in the details of this personal experience he is pictured as seeking so to draw the thoughts of the sufferer away from himself, that he might be prepared for the truth which Eliphaz desired him to grasp.

13. **Visions of the night**. The mystery of dreams greatly impressed the ancient world. It was thought that God made known his will through them, or disclosed the future. This is especially the view of the writer of the E document in the Pentateuch (see Gen. 20:6; 28:12; 37:5; 40:5). In spite of the more spiritual conception of the prophets, who found the vision of God in direct intellectual and spiritual insight, the essentially divine character of dreams lingered on to the latest period of Old Testament writing. Thus we are told that Daniel received his revelations in "visions of the night" (Dan. 2:19 and 28). To Eliphaz accordingly the fact that the thoughts that follow were impressed upon him in a night vision stamped them with divine authority. **When deep sleep falleth on men**. At this time their attention is not outwardly distracted; their minds are open to the unseen world. Such was the ancient point of view.

14. **Fear came upon me**. The approach of the uncanny spectre was subconsciously apprehended, so that the fear and trembling began even before the vague spiritual shape was visible.

15. **A spirit passed**. It is better with the margin to read "breath." He saw nothing, but felt the moving of the air. What he saw is described in the next verse. **The hair of my flesh stood up**. The horror of fear ran over the whole body. The rising of the hair is a familiar figure for the expression of fear, common, for example, in Virgil.

16. **It stood still**. These and the words which follow convey vividly the vague impression of a supernatural presence which

A form was before mine eyes:
[1] *There was* silence, and I heard a voice, *saying*,
17. Shall mortal man [2] be more just than God?
Shall a man [3] be more pure than his Maker?
18. Behold, he putteth no trust in his servants;
And his angels he chargeth with folly:

---

[1] m. Or *heard a still voice.* Better, *Silence! I heard a voice.*
[2] m. Or *be just before God.*
[3] m. Or *be pure before his Maker.*

---

the dream itself made upon Eliphaz. **A form was before mine eyes.** He seemed to discern an indistinct outline, while he could not distinguish individual features. **There was silence.** We gain a more vivid picture by translating the Hebrew literally, omitting the words in italics. Eliphaz makes the scene live again as he says: "Silence: I heard a voice!"

17. **More just than God.** While this is a possible translation of the words, it clearly gives an impossible meaning. The thought that man could be more just than God is too absurd ever to have suggested itself to the orthodox Eliphaz. Even Job, in the heat of the later debate, though he suggests that God is unrighteous, never suggests that man can be more righteous than he. The vision of Eliphaz, too, was experienced before he knew what Job was going to say, or even of Job's calamity. A better translation is given by the margin. This rendering, "Shall mortal man be just before God?" is supported by the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions, and is such a thought as Eliphaz could entertain. The Vulgate approaches it by translating: "Shall man be accounted just in comparison with God?" **A man more pure than his Maker.** The thought is as absurd as to suppose that water will rise to a higher level than the source that feeds it. We should read with the margin: "be pure before his Maker."

18. **His servants.** As the following line shows, this refers to the angels. **His angels he chargeth with folly.** In the oldest part of the book of Enoch (chs. 1–36), which was probably written between 200 and 170 B.C., angels are divided into good and bad, and the bad angels play an important part in the corruption of the world. This distinction was accepted by later Judaism and Christianity, see Matt. 25:41; Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12:7. In earlier parts of the Old Testament, however, angels were undifferentiated; they might do anything either good or bad, see Gen. 6:2; 1 Kgs. 22:21–23. The conception of angels in the poem here is intermediate between these two; it corre-

19. How much more them that dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
[1] Which are crushed [2] before the moth!
20. [3] Betwixt morning and evening they are [4] destroyed:
They perish for ever without any regarding it.

---

[1] Gr Sah. Eth. *Whom he crushed.* [2] m. Or, *like.* [3] m. Or *From morning unto evening.* [4] m. Heb. *broken in pieces.*

---

sponds to the conception of them in the prologue, chs. 1 and 2. There Satan was still an angel, but God regards him as holding erroneous views of human virtue, charges him with it, and tries to convert him from it. "His angels he chargeth with folly," implies just this sort of thing. The distinction of angels into classes as in Enoch and the New Testament is not here contemplated. **Folly.** The word in the original is difficult as it occurs nowhere else in Hebrew. It appears to come from one of two stems which in Arabic and Ethiopic respectively mean "to wander," "go astray." "Error" rather than folly seems to be the meaning.

19. **Houses of clay . . . the dust.** A reference to the account of man's creation in the J document in Genesis. See Gen. 2:7; 3:19. A similar thought is expressed in Ps. 78:39: "He remembered that they were but flesh." There is in the Old Testament none of the Persian conception that matter is inherently corrupt, but these passages recognize that the flesh is frail and that because of this men are exposed to temptations to which pure spirits are free. **Which are crushed before the moth.** The Greek version translated: "he crushes them like a moth"; the Sahidic and Vulgate: "They are crushed like a moth." The idea being not that the moth consumes the body, so that it is crushed before them, but that the body is fragile like them and is as easily crushed.

20. **Betwixt morning and evening they are destroyed.** The figure of the moth is still in the poet's mind. He thinks of them as living less than a day, and makes their life a vivid figure of the brevity of human existence. **Without any regarding it.** The killing of a moth, which is at the best but an ephemerid, is too insignificant an event to attract attention. It becomes a powerful figure of the slight impression that the death of a man makes in the universe.

21. [1] Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them?
They die, and that without wisdom.
5. Call now; is there any that will answer thee?
And to which of the [2] holy ones wilt thou turn?
2. For vexation killeth the foolish man,

---

[1] m. Or *Is not their excellency which is in them removed?* [2] m. See 15:15.

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21. **Their tent-cord plucked up.** The reading of the margin, "Is not their excellency which is in them removed?" while a possible translation, is far inferior to that of the text. There is much analogy for taking the word which the margin renders "excellency" as "tent-cord," and the figure is clearly drawn from nomadic life. The tent is easily "plucked up" and moved away. It is at the best but a transitory dwelling, and when removed leaves few traces of its presence. It thus becomes, as in Isa. 38:12, a powerful figure of the brevity of human life. **Without wisdom.** As the angels are charged with "error," so man, more frail, ends his brief life "without wisdom."

(3) *Eliphaz applies the principle to Job*, 5:1–7

1. **To which of the holy ones wilt thou turn?** "Holy ones" refers to "angels," to whom Eliphaz had referred in 4:18. Job had implied in his complaint (3:23) that God was to be blamed for his suffering. Eliphaz believes that it is due to some sin in Job. It occurred to Eliphaz that Job might appeal to one of the angels, either to take his part against God, or to intercede with God. In Babylonia penitents often called upon one god to intercede with another, and the idea seems to have been widespread in the Semitic world that such intercession was possible. Among monotheistic Semites it was naturally angels who were thought to perform that office, see Coran, Sura 53:26. Such is the thought here, though no such idea is expressed elsewhere in the Old Testament. Ch. 33:23 is generally cited by scholars as a parallel, but it is probable that no angel is referred to there, but a messenger only, and that by the messenger Elihu means himself. The idea of angelic intercession is, however, found in the Ethiopic Enoch, a Jewish book considerably later than Job; see Eth. Enoch 97:3; 99:16 — a part of the work written between 104–79 B.C. As the thought is one that belongs to the old Semitic inheritance, and was entertained by Jews later, it is not strange to find it here.

2. **For vexation killeth the foolish man.** The preceding verse had asked if Job would appeal to any, even to angels, against God. This verse gives the reason why such an appeal should not be

And [1] jealousy slayeth the silly one.
3. I have seen the foolish taking root:
But suddenly [2] I cursed his habitation.
4. His children are far from safety,
And they are crushed [3] in the gate,
Neither is there any to deliver them.
5. Whose harvest the hungry eateth up,
[4] And taketh it even out of the thorns,

---

[1] m. Or *indignation.* [2] Gr. Sah. Syr. Ar. and Eth. *his habitation was consumed.*
[3] Sah. omits *in the gate.* [4] Gr. and Sah. *And they shall not be delivered from the wicked.* Aq. *He shall be taken at the hands of armed men.* Sym. *They shall be taken at the hands of armed men.* Eth. *The wicked shall not make war upon them.* Syr. Ar. *And they shall be poured out for thirst.* Vulg. *The armed man shall seize him.*

---

made. It would but increase Job's vexation without obtaining for him any relief, and so but aggravate his calamity and hasten his death. **Jealousy**. It is better to read with the margin, "indignation." The hot restlessness of one in such a temper helps to burn out his life.

3. **I cursed his habitation**. This makes no good sense. Why should Eliphaz curse his habitation? He might recognize that it was cursed, but the context demands the statement of some strong antithesis in the fortune of the wicked himself. This antithesis is secured if with the five versions noted above we read, "suddenly his dwelling was consumed." It means in Hebrew the change of but two letters.

4. **In the gate**. The courts of justice, consisting of the elders of the city, sat in the gate (see Ruth 4:1 ff.). When the powerful protector of a family, the father, was gone, the children were overpowered or crushed before the tribunals. The strongest arm and longest purse obtained the verdict.

5. **Whose harvest the hungry eateth up**. They cannot protect the income of their fields. It is the prey of rapacious thief or hungry animal. **And taketh it even out of the thorns**. This rendering of the Hebrew is impossible — indeed the Hebrew is itself impossible. That it was already corrupt in ancient times is shown by the renderings of the versions given above. The line probably arose originally from an accidental repetition of a Hebrew word, other words being added afterward to make sense of it. If it is dropped and we read simply:

"Whose harvest the hungry eateth up,
And the thirsty swallow up their substance,"

And [1] the snare gapeth for their substance.
6. For [2] affliction cometh not forth of the dust,
Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;
7. But man is born unto trouble,
As [3] the sparks fly upward.
8. But as for me, I would seek unto God,
And unto God would I commit my cause:

---

[1] According to many ancient versions, *the thirsty swallow up*. [2] m. Or *iniquity*. See 4:8. [3] m. Heb. *the sons of flame* or *of lightning*. Gr. Sah. *the nestlings of the vulture*. Aq. Sym. Syr. Ar. Eth. *the young of birds*. Targ. *sons of demons*.

---

we have a much clearer thought and a stronger verse. **The snare gapeth for their substance.** The marginal reading, which is supported by Aq. Sym. Syr. Vulg., should be adopted.

6. **Affliction cometh not forth of the dust.** Eliphaz means that afflictions are not accidental. They have a cause. Eliphaz is reasoning here from effect back to cause. Since Job is afflicted, he should recognize that there is a cause for his suffering.

7. **Man is born unto trouble.** The expression is vague, but seems to imply that he is born to trouble because he is born to sin, and that sin brings trouble upon him. Some scholars would make this thought more obvious by rendering (through a change of the Hebrew pointing) "man begets trouble." The versions, however, support the present text. **The sparks.** The versions, as shown above, understood this in quite different ways, but whether we render "sparks" or "lightning" or "young vultures" or "young birds," it is clear that the figure referred to something that was impelled to rise by the laws of its own nature. Although scholars have found many difficulties in the interpretation of this and the preceding verse, it seems probable that Eliphaz intends to imply that it is man's nature to sin, and, since sin brings trouble, he is necessarily always in trouble.

(4) *Job should seek God, whose chastisements lead to richer blessing,* 5:8–27

8. **But as for me.** The Hebrew expresses here a strong contrast; it is the contrast between what Job is doing, and what Eliphaz thinks he would do under similar circumstances. **I would seek unto God**: in humility, for light to understand my error and for help to correct it. Eliphaz did not understand what Job at a later point makes clear, that Job felt his way to God cut off.

9. Which doeth great things and unsearchable;
[1] Marvellous things without number:
10. Who giveth rain upon the earth,
And sendeth waters upon the fields:
11. [2] So that he setteth up on high those that be low;
And those which mourn are exalted to safety.
12. He frustrateth the devices of the crafty,
So that their hands [3] cannot perform their enterprise.
13. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness:

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[1] 16 Heb. MSS. Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Ar. Eth. *Even marvellous things.* [2] Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *Who setteth up.* [3] m. Or, *can perform nothing of worth.* Gr. Sah. Eth. rendered *anything true.* Syr. *wisdom.* Vulg. *what they undertake.* Targ. *the counsel of their wisdom.* Ar. *purpose.*

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9. **Which doeth great things and unsearchable.** This is urged as the reason for the exhortation implied in v. 8. God's ability to accomplish that which the understanding of man cannot fathom affords ground for hope that he may solve the perplexities of Job's tangled problem, if Job but commits his case to God.

10. **Who giveth rain upon the earth.** This is cited as a token of his power and his universal goodness. In the thirsty East rain is one of the greatest blessings. Eliphaz implies that he who refreshes the thirsty earth may soothe and heal the suffering Job.

11. **So that he setteth up.** It is better with the versions cited above to read "who setteth up." The verse does not express a consequence of the giving of the rain, but an entirely separate instance of God's supreme power. It is an instance, too, especially appropriate to the case in hand, for he that "raiseth up the low" may raise up Job.

12. **He frustrateth the devices of the crafty.** This is a favorite thought with the sages of the Old Testament. **Cannot perform their enterprise.** The word rendered enterprise is in the Hebrew an unusual and difficult one. It occurs mainly in the wisdom books. The various renderings of the versions cited above show that it was not well understood by the ancient translators. It apparently means "abiding success," and the clause should be translated: "do not achieve abiding success."

13. **He taketh the wise in their own craftiness,** continues and expands the thought of the preceding verse. The quotation of this in 1 Cor. 3:19 is the only direct quotation from Job in the

And the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.
14. They meet with darkness in the day-time,
And grope at noonday as in the night.
15. But he saveth from the sword [1] of their mouth,
Even the needy from the hand of the mighty.
16. So the poor hath hope,
And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.
17. [2] Behold, happy is the man whom God [3] correcteth:

---

[1] m. Heb. *out of their mouth.* Gr. Sah. Eth. render the verse *But they perish in war, and are unable to escape from the hand of the conqueror.* [2] 5 Heb. MSS. Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Ar. Eth. omit *Behold.* [3] m. Or, *reproveth.*

New Testament, though Job 3:21a is quoted almost verbatim in Rev. 9:6; and Job 41:11 in Rom. 11:35.

14. **And grope at noonday as in the night.** A vivid picture of the perplexity of one who, baffled in the labyrinth of life, seeks for a ray of hope. Compare Deut. 28:29, and for physical parallels, Gen. 19:11; 2 Kgs. 6:18–20; and Acts 13:11.

15. **From the sword of their mouth.** This line makes no sense, and is very unusual Hebrew. Three of the ancient versions, as noted above, had a very different text, though their reading is no more intelligible than the present Hebrew. As modern interpreters have noted, some word like "poor" must have stood in place of "their mouth." If we restore this, the verse would read:

> "But he saves from the sword the poor,
> And the needy from the hand of the mighty."

This gives a clear thought, makes the verse a natural contrast to the preceding one, and prepares the way for the one that follows.

16. **So the poor hath hope.** It is such interference on their behalf, Eliphaz believed, that gives the poor their hope in God. **Iniquity stoppeth her mouth.** Compare Ps. 107:42. When they see their designs frustrated, and those whom they have sought to destroy rising in prosperity, the wicked are dumb with astonishment. This, at least, was the view of Eliphaz. In real life the wicked under such circumstances still have power to curse. The verse gives us Eliphaz's view of the end contemplated by the sweep of God's providences.

17. **Happy is the man whom God correcteth.** Compare Pr. 3:11 and 12 (quoted in Heb. 12:5 and 6), also Ps. 94:12.

Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the
Almighty.
18. For he maketh sore, and bindeth up;
He woundeth, and his hands make whole.
19. He shall deliver thee [1] in six troubles;
Yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.
20. In famine he shall redeem thee from death;
And in war from the power of the sword.
21. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue;

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *from six troubles.*

The imagination of Eliphaz kindles as he thinks of God's goodness to the penitent sinner, and he portrays afflictions as though they were choice blessings. Underlying all, however, is the assumption that Job has sinned, and that his present affliction is a punishment for sin. As Job is conscious that he has committed nothing to warrant the infliction of such sufferings, the words of Eliphaz irritate him, rather than lead him to repentance.

18. **He maketh sore, and bindeth up.** Rather "he maketh sore that he may bind up." Like the skilful surgeon, God uses the knife in order that the healing may be the more complete. For similar thoughts see Deut. 32 : 39 and Hos. 6 : 1.

19. **In six troubles . . . in seven.** This is a vivid way of expressing the idea of "many." Compare Isa. 17 : 6; Micah 5 : 5; and Eccl. 11 : 2. Similarly "some" was expressed by the numbers "three and four" or "four and five" in Amos 1 : 3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2 : 1, 4, 6; Pr. 30 : 15, 18, 21; Ex. 20 : 5; 34 : 7 and "few" by "two and three" in Job 33 : 14, 29; Ps. 62 : 11; and Isa. 17 : 6.

20. **Death . . . sword.** These are explanatory examples illustrating the "troubles" referred to in the preceding verse

21. **Of the tongue.** Slander, or the scourge of the envious tongue, is an evil of which many Psalmists complain (see Ps. 5 : 9; 15 : 3; 52 : 2; 57 : 4; 64 : 3; etc.). Protection from slander seems, however, inappropriate here, since all the other dangers enumerated are objective, such as famine, war, and wild beasts. Although all the ancient versions support the reading "tongue," those scholars may be right who think we should substitute here a word meaning "pestilence." If we do this, the four dangers mentioned are the same as those enumerated in Eze. 5 : 17 and 14 : 21 ff.

Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.
22. At destruction and dearth thou shalt laugh;
Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
23. [1] For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field;
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.
24. And thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace;
And thou shalt visit thy [2] fold, and [3] shalt miss nothing.
25. Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great,

---

[1] Gr. Sym. Sah. Eth. omit *For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field.*
[2] m. Or, *habitation.*
[3] m. Or, *shalt not err.*

---

22. **Neither shalt thou be afraid.** The rendering is not quite accurate, and misses a delicate shade of meaning. The negative is not the same that was used in v. 21. It conveys the thought, "thou needest not fear."

23. **The stones of the field.** Which might easily render the land unfruitful, if they were too numerous; see Isa. 5:2. **The beasts of the field shall be at peace.** One element of the highest conceptions of the kingdom of God in both the Old Testament and the New consists of the ideal of a profound sympathy and harmony between man and nature. See Isa. 11:6–9 and Rom. 8:19 and 22.

24. **Thy tent.** This is the literal meaning of the word and is better than the marginal rendering, "habitation." **Shall miss nothing.** This is to be preferred to the marginal reading, "shalt not err." According to the theology of Eliphaz and his friends righteousness is rewarded by outward prosperity. This verse expresses the security that Eliphaz believed the really good man would experience.

25. **Thy seed shall be great.** A numerous posterity was throughout the Old Testament considered one of the choicest blessings, see Gen. 15:5; Num. 23:10; Ps. 25:13; 37:26; 89:29, 36; 102:24; Isa. 38:10; 53:10. Eliphaz accordingly

And thine offspring as the grass of the [1] earth.
26. Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age,
Like as a shock of corn cometh in its season.
27. Lo this, we have searched it, so it is;
[2] Hear it, and know thou it [3] for thy good.

2. *Job's First Reply to Eliphaz*, Chs. 6, 7

6. Then Job answered and said,
2. Oh that my vexation were but weighed,
And my calamity laid in the balances together!
3. For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas:

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[1] Gr. Sah. Targ. *field*. [2] Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *We have heard it*. [3] m. Heb. *for thyself*.

---

enumerates this among the blessings that will come to Job, quite forgetful for the moment that Job's children have all perished. It is possible, however, that he meant to suggest that if Job were reconciled to God he might hope for another family. This would accord well with the point of view of the Arab of to-day.

26. **In a full age.** We should rather render "in firm strength." Long life is presupposed (see Ps. 91 : 16) and is expressed in the next clause; Eliphaz declares that vigor to enjoy it all is given to the righteous. **A shock of corn . . . in its season.** This expresses the promise of long life.

27. **Hear it.** The Hebrew word is very peculiar. We should adopt the reading of the versions cited above, "we have heard it." **Know thou it.** Eliphaz exhorts Job to put it to the test of experience. **For thy good.** The marginal reading, "for thyself," is to be followed here.

(1) *Job justifies the violence of his complaint*, 6 : 1–13.

2. **Oh that my vexation were but weighed.** Job had been deeply hurt by the words of Eliphaz, who had entirely failed to understand or to enter into sympathy with him. Eliphaz had expressed surprise at Job's impatience (4 : 3–5), and had implied that such vexation consumed foolish people (5 : 2). This Job resents, and declares that if his vexation were put in the balance with his calamity, it would be found that he was not more impatient than the misfortune warranted.

3. **Sand of the seas.** Sand is in the Old Testament a favorite figure for that which is infinite in weight or number or measure;

Therefore have my words been rash.
4. For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,
The poison whereof my spirit drinketh up:
[1] The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.
5. Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?
Or loweth the ox over his fodder?
6. Can that which hath no savour be eaten without salt?

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *When God rouses me, they hurt me.*

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see Pr. 27:3; Gen. 32:12; Jer. 33:22. **Have my words been rash.** Job does not mean that the content of his utterance was not justified, but that the form was wild and delirious. This is clear from his reference to the cause — the poison of the arrows of Jehovah — in the next verse.

4. **For the arrows of the Almighty are within me.** Job regarded this as the explanation of his bearing. It was not the calamities themselves that unmanned him, but his doubt of God. Job was conscious of no sin, hence his misfortunes seemed to prove that God had without reason turned against him. An irresponsible tyrant ruled the universe and was amusing himself by torturing Job. For the arrow as a figure of the shafts of affliction, see Job 16:12 and 13; Deut. 32:23; and Ps. 38:2 and 3. **The poison whereof.** God's arrows were poisoned arrows. This is a strong figure of the effect which the agony created by Job's doubt of God produced. **The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.** This is not a good ending to Job's metaphor. We should adopt the reading of the three versions noted above: "When God rouses me they hurt me." It means in Hebrew but the transposition of two letters, and restores the lost sense. The Almighty's arrows are sticking in Job, their poison fevers his brain, he cannot move without being hurt by them. No wonder his complaint was vehement and wild!

5. **Doth the wild ass bray . . . loweth the ox.** Since animals do not cry out when their wants are satisfied, but only when in distress, Job's friends should know that his cry has an adequate cause.

6. **Can that which hath no savour.** The point of this remark comes out in the next verse. **The white of an egg.** The Hebrew

Or is there any taste in [1] the white of an egg?
7. [2] My soul refuseth [3] to touch *them;*
[4] They are as loathsome meat to me.
8. Oh that I might have [5] my request;
And that God would grant *me* the thing that I long for!
9. Even that it would please God to crush me;

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[1] m. Or, *the juice of purslain.* Syr. *the juice of anchusa.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *in vain words.* Vulg. *that which tasted brings death.* Ar. *spittle of the foolish.* Targ. *white of an egg.* [2] m. Or, What things *my soul refused to touch, these are as my loathsome meat.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *to rest.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *I see the stink of my food as the smell of a lion.* Syr. Ar. *Or cries out like drunken men to fight me.* Vulg. *Now before my distress is my food.* Targ. *They make me sick and are enough for my dinner.* [5] 3 MSS. Vulg. Targ. *this.*

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words here are obscure, and the readings of the ancient versions cited above show that in ancient times they were not understood. The Targum only supports the reading of the text of RV. It is not an insuperable objection to this rendering that the domestic hen is not mentioned in Palestinian writings until the New Testament period, having been first domesticated in eastern Asia and introduced into the West through Persia, for Deut. 22:6 and Isa. 10:14 show that the eggs of wild birds might be gathered. The eggs of the ostrich are mentioned in Job 39:14, and the Arabs to-day make an omelette of these which is highly prized. It is, however, more probable that the reading of the margin should be adopted. The reference would then be to the tastelessness of the juice of some plant. This affords a better meaning than to follow the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions, as some scholars do, and render "vain words." The taste of vain words is a mixed metaphor of which it is unfair to suppose this great poet guilty.

7. **My soul refuseth to touch them.** "Them" refers to Job's afflictions. They are as unattractive to his spirit as the tasteless things of v. 6 to the palate. **They are as loathsome meat to me.** This represents a very unusual, if not an impossible, Hebrew. That the text is probably corrupt the renderings of the ancient versions quoted above show. It is now perhaps impossible to restore it. On the whole the suggestion of Ley to change two letters of the Hebrew and read, "They make me loathe my food," is the simplest and best.

8. **My request.** This refers to Job's longing for death expressed in 3:20–24. His reference to his sufferings brings to remembrance this desire, and leads to renewed expression of it.

That he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!
10. Then should I yet have comfort;
[1] Yea, I would [2] exult in pain [3] that spareth not:
[4] For I have not [5] denied the words of the Holy One.
11. What is my strength, that I should wait?
And what is mine end, that I should be patient?
12. Is my strength the strength of stones?
Or is my flesh of brass?
13. [6] Is it not that I have no help in me,

---

[1] m. Or, *Though I shrink back.* [2] m. Or, *harden myself.* [3] m. Or, *though he spare not.* [4] m. Or, *That.* [5] m. Or, *concealed.* [6] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *Behold there is no help in me.*

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9. **Let loose his hand.** Job felt that God had hitherto smitten him with a fettered hand. If he would but give his hand free play and entirely crush Job or cut him off, then Job's misery would be over. Job has here forgotten his defence in sheer wretchedness, and has broken out in this passionate cry.

10. **Then should I yet have comfort.** Job's comfort would be in death, the calmness and peace of which he had so vividly described (3: 20–24). **Yea, I would exult in pain that spareth not.** The text is in each case to be preferred to the marginal renderings. The short period of pain which preceded death he would gladly endure for the calmness which would follow. **For I have not denied the words of the Holy One.** Again the text is to be preferred to the marginal readings. The sentence seems so meaningless on Job's lips that many scholars regard it as a later interpolation. Job did not look forward to a future life, but to the inanimate Sheol (3: 20–24). All the versions read the text here, however, and it seems difficult to throw it out. It seems to be a parenthetical assertion on Job's part of his innocence — a sort of suddenly interjected reply to the insinuations of Eliphaz concerning his guilt.

11. **Be patient.** In this verse Job returns to the insinuation of Eliphaz that the calamities should have been borne in a different spirit, and strongly asserts that that was too much to expect.

12. **Stones . . . brass.** It would take hard, unfeeling metal to bear the strain, and Job was quivering, sensitive flesh.

13. **Is it not that.** We should read with three versions cited above, "Behold there is no help in me." **Effectual working.**

And that [1] effectual working is driven quite from
me?
14. To him that is ready to faint kindness *should be shewed* from his friend;
[2] Even to him that forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.
15. My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook,
As the channel of brooks that pass away;
16. Which are black by reason of the ice,

---

[1] m. Or, *sound wisdom.*

[2] m. Or, *Else might he forsake,* Or, *But he forsaketh.*

Better than either the text or the margin is the rendering "abiding success." In contrast to the strength of stones and brass Job declares that he is destitute of ordinary human strength, and is able to achieve abiding success in nothing — not even in being patient.

(2) *Job expresses disappointment at the attitude of his friend*, 6:14–30.

14. **To him that is ready to faint.** The Hebrew word here is peculiar, occurring nowhere else. The ancient versions (Gr. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. Sah. Eth.) had readings which suggest a stem meaning "deny." Perhaps we should read:

> "To one who is denied kindness from his friend,
> Even he forsakes the fear of the Almighty."

The thought of the verse would then be, when taken in connection with the last clause of v. 10, that, although Job had not become godless, the attitude of Eliphaz might drive him to it.

15. **Dealt deceitfully.** This is a strong way of expressing Job's disappointment in his friends. When they came, he had hoped for real understanding and sympathy, but the speech of Eliphaz had shown that this hope was not to be fulfilled. "Deceitfully" is a reference to the false nature of this fair promise. **As a brook, as the channel of brooks that pass away.** There are in Palestine but few perennial streams. On the other hand, numerous valleys are in the rainy season turned into temporary brooks. When the rain ceases they speedily run dry. They may hold out a promise of refreshment to the traveller, but are almost sure to disappoint it. The following verses develop the figure with vivid details.

16. **Black by reason of the ice.** A reference to the turbid waters of the streams when the ice melts to augment the current.

And wherein the snow hideth itself:
17. What time [1] they [2] wax warm, they vanish:
When it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.
18. [3] The caravans *that travel* by the way of them turn aside;
They go up into the waste, and perish.
19. The caravans of Tema looked,
The companies of Sheba waited for them.
20. They were ashamed because they had hoped;
They came thither, and were confounded.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *it is warm.* [2] m. Or, *shrink.* [3] m. Or, *The paths of their way are turned aside.*

The snow hideth itself. By melting. This increases the volume of water.

17. **They wax warm.** The text is preferable to the marginal reading, but we should read with the versions cited above, "it is warm." **They are consumed out of their place.** Nothing is more desolate than the dry valley of such a brook in the summertime; see Barton, *Wandering in Bible Lands*, opp. p. 133.

18. **The caravans.** The text is better than the marginal reading. The picture is that of a caravan that has come from a long way and planned to camp by such a stream. It finds no water and is compelled to turn aside on the chance of finding a pool near by; it cannot reach the next stream. To experience the force of the figure one should have experienced such a disappointment in the thirsty East. For an account of such an episode, see Barton, *Wandering in Bible Lands*, pp. 215 ff. **Into the waste, and perish.** They perish while seeking water in the desert.

19. **Tema . . . Sheba.** The former was in Edom on the confines of northern Arabia (see Isa. 21:14; Jer. 25:23). Sheba was the famous city Saba in South Arabia (see note on 1:15). The lives of the caravans of towns from far and near are imperiled by the unexpected failure of the lonely, insignificant brook. It is a powerful figure of the deadly harm that results from the failure of even an insignificant character to live up to that which may be justly expected of it.

20. **Ashamed.** As often in the Old Testament, means "disappointed."

21. [1] For now ye [2] are [3] nothing;
Ye see a terror, and are afraid.
22. Did I say, Give unto me?
Or, Offer a present for me of your substance?
23. Or, Deliver me from the adversary's hand?
Or, Redeem me from the hand of the oppressors?
24. Teach me, and I will hold my peace:
And cause me to understand wherein I have erred.
25. How [4] forcible are words of uprightness!
But what doth your arguing reprove?

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[1] Syr. Ar. Eth. *Thus.* [2] m. Another reading is *are* like *thereto.* [3] Syr. Ar. *to me.* [4] 1 Heb. MS. and Targ. *sweet.*

21. **For now ye are nothing.** The Hebrew is very unusual, and the versions show that it early became corrupt. We should probably read with the versions cited above: "Thus are ye to me," *i.e.* ye are like the disappointing streams previously described. **Ye see a terror, and are afraid.** Their imaginary conception of Job's sinfulness dries up their sympathy and makes them like the disappointing brook.

22. **A present . . . of your substance.** Had Job asked material aid — a gift of money or goods — he would not have been surprised, he says, at their lack of sympathy. Even friendship could not be expected to undergo such a strain as that!

23. **Adversary's hand.** That is, the hand of a bandit. Such deliverance would require a ransom, as the next line shows. Modern instances like the case of Miss Stone, the American missionary in Macedonia, and Ian Perdicarris, who was captured by Rais Uli in Morocco, illustrate the thought. The verse expresses in another form the thought of v. 22.

24. **Teach me.** Job claimed that he was ready to be taught his real faults, but he could not see that the words of Eliphaz touched upon any reality.

25. **How forcible are words of uprightness!** The Hebrew word rendered "forcible" does not have that meaning. We should read with one Heb. MS. and the Targum, "How sweet!" Job feels that words that were really just to him would be sweet. **But what doth your arguing reprove?** The Hebrew is, "What doth reproving from you reprove!" Job is very scornful, for

26. Do ye imagine to reprove words?
Seeing that the speeches of one that is desperate are[1] as wind.
27. Yea, ye would cast *lots* upon the fatherless,
And make merchandise of your friend.
28. Now therefore be pleased to look upon me;
[2] For surely I shall not lie to your face.
29. Return, I pray you, let there be no injustice;
Yea, return again, [3] my cause is righteous.

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[1] m. Or, *for the wind.* [2] m. Or, *And it will be evident unto you if I lie.* [3] m. Heb. *my righteousness is in it.* Perhaps we should read *let justice come.*

---

to his supersensitive mind the words of Eliphaz have been most unjust.

26. **To reprove words.** One in the impatience of illness says many things that he does not half mean. Job in this verse admits that he has done so, and expresses wonder that his friends knew so little of human nature that they should seriously undertake to answer the wild utterances of a despairing man.

27. **Ye would cast lots upon the fatherless.** They have been so unfeeling that Job declares that they would even cast lots upon the fatherless. Pity toward orphans and care for them is inculcated throughout the Old Testament and the Coran (see *e.g.* Deut. 24:17 and 19; Ps. 68:5; Pr. 23:10; Isa. 1:23; etc.). Those who were unfeeling toward such were severely denounced. Such a charge against the friends of Job is, of course, unjust, and many scholars have thought it a difficulty that it comes in here so abruptly and inappropriately. It is, however, just the sort of extravagant charge that an exasperated invalid whose nerves were all on edge might make, and the poet has displayed his insight and skill in putting it upon Job's lips. **Merchandise of your friend.** Like the preceding charge, it is extravagantly unjust, but Job is led to these wild utterances by his keen sense of the lack of real insight and sympathy on the part of his friends.

28. **Be pleased.** As we say "be good enough." **Surely I shall not lie to your face.** Job's thought is that by looking him straight in the face they could tell whether in the assertion of innocence he was lying. Consciousness of falsehood betrays itself in the countenance. The test proposed is a real test.

29. **Return.** We should rather translate "turn." Job continues the request that they shall look in his face. **My cause is**

30. Is there injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my taste discern mischievous things?
7. Is there not a [1] warfare to man upon earth?
And are not his days like the days of an hireling?
2. As a servant that earnestly desireth the shadow,

righteous. As this stands it is an assertion of his innocence, but as it is preceded by the request that they "turn," we should probably change one letter of the Hebrew and read, "let justice come." It would then continue Job's invitation that they apply the test of scrutiny while he asserts his innocence.

30. **Is there injustice on my tongue?** This does not mean, "have I said anything wrong?" but "is my tongue wrong?" *i.e.* has it lost its sense of taste so that it deceives me? **Cannot my taste discern?** "Taste" is used figuratively for moral insight. He means, Have I not power to distinguish right and wrong?

(3) *A renewed outburst in which Job charges God with cruelly tormenting him*, 7 : 1–21

1. **Warfare.** This is a better reading than that of the margin. The Hebrew word is regularly used of military expeditions and military service. It is the same word that is rendered "warfare" in Isa. 40 : 2.

The poet with masterly skill makes Job pass for a moment from his own particular suffering to the agonizing travail of mankind. Job catches for a moment through the window of his own torture a glimpse of the sufferings of humanity, and those sufferings are pictured under the figure of a hard military campaign. The hardships must be endured, and endured to the end; there is no discharge (cf. Eccl. 8 : 8). The hard marches, the cold and heat, the wounds and sickness, must be endured till the campaign is finished. **Hireling.** This might mean a mercenary soldier, since it is so used in Jer. 46 : 21; but as it means "hired laborer" in the next verse, it probably means that here. The master of a slave has a property interest in the slave's welfare, but for the hired laborer he cares nothing personally. He wrings from him all that he can. So the poet thinks the lot of this type of laborer is especially hard.

2. **A servant that earnestly desireth the shadow.** "Panteth for the shadow" would be a better translation of the Hebrew word than "earnestly desireth." The phrase vividly pictures a slave sweltering under the fierce Syrian sun and panting for the

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[1] m. Or, *time of service.*

And as an hireling that looketh for his wages:
3. So am I made to possess months of vanity,
And wearisome nights are appointed to me.
4. When I lie down, I say,
[1] When shall I arise? but the night is long;
And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.
5. My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust;
My skin [2] closeth up and [3] breaketh out afresh.
6. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *When will it be day that I may arise?* m. Or, *When shall I arise and the night be gone?* [2] m. Or, *is broken and become loathsome.* [3] Syr. Targ. read *is moistened.*

---

cool shadows of evening when labor will be over. **Looketh for his wages.** Hired laborers are paid at evening. The phrase is equivalent to saying that he longs for evening.

3. **So am I.** Job's intense suffering will not permit him to be impersonal for long. He comes quickly back from his glance at humanity to a personal complaint. **Months . . . nights.** At first sight this is a strange parallel, but the "months" expresses the duration of sufferings, and the "nights" the degree of his pain, which was more intense then.

4. **When I lie down.** This explains why "night" was used so peculiarly in the preceding verse. Job's malady made the nights particularly irksome. **When shall I arise?** It is better to read with the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic, "When will it be day that I may arise?" **I am full of tossings.** This explains why the night seems so long.

5. **With worms.** Maggots. This is one of the results of the disease. **Closeth up.** It is better, taking the Hebrew word from a different root, to render "hardens." **Breaketh out afresh.** This is the sense of the reading which the Syriac and Targum support. Scabs form, then the pus pushes through again.

6. **My days are swifter.** This is not in contradiction to v. 4, for "days" refers here not to individual days, but to life as a whole. The Greek and Sahidic render it "life." Life as a whole is brief and passes quickly, even if individual days seem endless throes of agony. As noted below, however, we should, perhaps, render "light" (*i.e. fragile*) instead of "swifter," which would change the figure somewhat. **Than a weaver's shuttle.** The

And are spent without hope.
7. Oh remember that my life is wind:
Mine eye shall no more see good.
8. [1] The eye of him that seeth me shall behold me no more:
Thine eyes shall be upon me, but I shall not be.

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[1] This verse was omitted from the original Greek version, is lacking in Sah., and is marked as doubtful in Theod.

Hebrew word translated "weaver's shuttle" really means "weaver" or "web." Indeed it is uncertain whether the looms known in Job's time had shuttles. The most primitive loom of the wandering Arabs had nothing to correspond to a shuttle, the thread being laboriously put through by hand. That described in Jud. 16: 13, 14, like some of the looms pictured on Egyptian monuments, apparently carried the thread through the warp by means of a stick somewhat wider than the web, which also served to beat the thread of the woof back into place (see G. F. Moore, *Commentary on Judges*, pp. 353 ff., and *Encyclopedia Biblica*, cols. 5280 and 5286). Since this uncertainty about the shuttle is so great, it is perhaps better, as some scholars have done, to render, "my days are as light as a weaver's thread." This would mean that the cord of life snaps as easily as the fine thread of the warp of a web in process of being woven. **And are spent without hope.** In case we adopt the rendering of the first half of the verse just suggested, we should render this, "and come to an end for lack of thread" — a meaning to which the Hebrew lends itself.

7. **Oh remember.** This is addressed to God; when Job addresses his friends, he uses in the Heb. the plural, which would be, "remember ye." For a moment in this address there crops out a touching bit of Job's old free familiarity with God. It is touching in view of the arraignment of God which he makes in the following verses. **My life is wind.** In its passing brevity. **No more see good.** That is, in this brief life. As the unattractive existence in Sheol was not regarded as life, it means that he will never again see peace and prosperity.

8. **The eye of him that seeth me shall behold me no more.** This verse was not contained in the Greek version used by Origen, is lacking in the Sahidic, and is marked as doubtful in Theod. As it anticipates the climax reached in v. 21 and is tautological in itself, it should probably be omitted.

9. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,
So he that goeth down to [1] Sheol shall come up no more.
10. He shall return no more to his house,
Neither shall his place know him any more.
11. Therefore I will not refrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12. Am I a sea, or a sea-monster,
That thou settest a watch over me?
13. When I say, My bed shall comfort me,
My couch shall ease my complaint;
14. Then thou scarest me with dreams,

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[1] m. Or, *the grave.*

---

9. **As the cloud.** A beautiful symbol of transitoriness, especially in a dry country like Palestine. **Shall come up no more.** This is the old Semitic and Old Testament view. No resurrection was looked forward to.

10. **Shall return no more.** This verse together with v. 9 forms a four-line couplet on the hopelessness of death.

11. **Therefore I will not refrain my mouth.** The brevity of life and the absence of a future life made the intense suffering of the few brief years of existence unbearable. Goaded by this, Job determined to speak out his mind, even to God.

12. **Am I a sea.** In 38: 11 the poet has beautifully expressed the thought that God at creation set a limit to the waves of the sea and gave directions that they should not transgress it. That thought seems to be in his mind here. Floods occurred at times in many parts of the world, and these gave him the idea that the sea was ever seeking to pass beyond its limit, and that God was compelled to keep a constant watch over it to prevent its doing so. The verse contains the first words of Job's defiant outpouring to God of the bitterness of his soul, to which v. 11 led up. **A sea-monster.** This is a reference to the primitive dragon Tiamat of the Babylonian Creation story. See the note on 3: 8.

14. **Then thou scarest me with dreams.** All who have been ill know how restless the patient's sleep often is, how disturbed with dreams. Hoping to gain a little refreshment from slumber

And terrifiest me through visions:
15. So that my soul chooseth strangling,
And death rather than *these* my bones.
16. [1] I loathe *my life;* I [2] would not live alway,[3]
Let me alone; for my days are [4] vanity.
17. What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him,
And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him,
18. And that thou shouldest visit him every morning,
And try him every moment?
19. How long wilt thou not look away from me,
Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

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[1] m. Or, *I waste away.*
[2] m. Or, *shall.*
[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. read the line *Not forever shall I live that I should be patient.*
[4] m. Or, *as a breath.*

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he often awakens more weary than ever. Job charges God with deliberately torturing him thus.

15. **Strangling.** This was probably suggested by the choking or sense of suffocation which was a result of Job's disease. **My bones.** It is thought by many to be a graphic way of describing his emaciated body. Many modern scholars by the change of one letter obtain a word which occurs in 9:28 and means "my pains." The text as it stands is, however, not impossible and is supported by all the versions.

16. **Let me alone.** The brevity of his life seems to Job a good reason why God should not fill its few days with torment.

17. **What is man.** These words are quoted from Ps. 8:5. In the Psalm they are spoken in thankfulness that God should think upon man when he is so insignificant in contrast to the starry heavens. Job, however, quotes the words in sarcasm, and in the same spirit alters the conclusion of the sentence. **Shouldest magnify him.** *I.e.* in thy thought, — consider him a being of any importance. **Set thine heart upon him.** *I.e.* shouldst think about him at all.

18. **Visit him every morning.** The word rendered "visit" is one that suggests a tour of inspection, as though God could not trust man alone for a single day. **Try him every moment.** The word rendered "try" we might translate "scrutinize." Job sarcastically says "man is a little creature, but God thinks him so important that he watches him all the time."

19. **Till I swallow down my spittle.** This is an Arabian pro-

20. If I have sinned, what [1] do I unto thee, O thou
[2] watcher of men?
Why hast thou set me as a mark for thee,
So that I am a burden to [3] myself?
21. And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?
For now shall I lie down in the dust;
And thou shalt seek me diligently, but I shall not be.

3. *The First Speech of Bildad the Shuhite*, Ch. 8

8. Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2. How long wilt thou speak these things?

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[1] m. Or, *can I do*. [2] m. Or, *preserver*. [3] 2 MSS. Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. and Jewish scribal corrections read *thyself*.

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verbial expression for a short time, like our "in the twinkling of an eye."

20. **Thou watcher of men.** While the rendering of the margin is possible, we should by all means keep that of the text. Job is in a defiant, not a reverential mood. Sarcastically he addressed God as the "watcher of men"; it seems to him in his present mood petty business for the great God. He claims that even if he has sinned, he is so small that his sin could in no way harm the omnipotent God. **Thou hast set me as a mark.** The figure is here changed. Job thinks of himself as a target at which God amuses himself by shooting. **To myself.** On the basis of the authorities quoted above we should read "to thyself." Job in that case was saying that all God's unnecessary attention to him made him a burden to God. Of course it is a continuation of his sarcasm.

21. **Why dost thou not pardon . . . mine iniquity?** The thought of the verse is, that even if Job had sinned against God, God could afford to forgive him, since Job's life is brief and he will soon be undistinguishable from any other dust.

(1) *The discriminating fairness of God*, 8:1–7

1. **Bildad the Shuhite.** See note on 2:11.
2. **These things.** A reference to the words of Job in 7:12–21.

And *how long* shall the words of thy mouth be
like a mighty wind?
3. Doth God pervert judgement?
Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?
4. [1] If thy children have sinned against him,
And he have delivered them into the hand of
their transgression:
5. [2] If thou wouldest seek diligently unto God,
And make thy supplication to the Almighty;
6. If thou wert pure and upright;
Surely now he [3] would awake for thee,

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[1] m. Or, *If thy children sinned . . . he delivered &c.*

[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *But do thou seek.*

[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *would be entreated of thee.*

Possibly Bildad also had in mind 6: 10, 29 and 7: 1, 2. **A mighty wind.** This comparison may have been intended to suggest that Job's words were empty, *i.e* mere wind, or (and this is the more probable view) that like a whirlwind they uprooted long-cherished beliefs.

3. **Doth God pervert judgement?** "God" and "Almighty" are placed by Bildad in emphatic positions in the two clauses. Bildad thereby expresses his astonishment at Job's utterances. Job's words reduced to their essence charged God with injustice. To Bildad God and injustice were mutually exclusive ideas. Bildad was right, except that his philosophy of God's relation to suffering was erroneous.

4. **If thy children have sinned.** It is better to translate the verse according to the suggestion of the margin as a sentence complete in itself: "If thy children sinned, he delivered them into the hand of their transgression." *I.e.* their death came to them as a just punishment from God.

5. **If thou wouldest seek.** It is better to read with the three versions cited above, "But do thou seek." Bildad means to imply that Job's sin is less heinous than that of his children because God has spared his life. This presents an opportunity for repentance and for seeking forgiveness. Bildad exhorts Job to embrace this opportunity.

6. **If thou wert pure and upright.** The Hebrew contains no verb; it is simply: "If pure and upright thou." Bildad believes that Job had sinned or he would not have been afflicted, but he thinks that perhaps affliction has produced repentance and made

And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
7. And though thy beginning was small,
Yet thy latter end should greatly increase.
8. For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age,
And [1] apply thyself to that which [2] their fathers have searched out:
9. (For [3] we are but of yesterday, and know nothing,
[4] Because our days upon earth are a shadow:)
10. Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,
And utter words out of their heart?

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[1] Syr. Ar. *understand that which.* [2] Gr. Sah. Vulg. Eth. omit *their.* [3] Heb. Gr. OLat. Vulg. Syr. Sah. *yesterday are we.* [4] Syr. Ar. *Like a shadow are our days.*

Job sufficiently pure so that God would hear his prayer. **He would awake for thee.** With the three versions quoted above we should read: "He will be entreated of thee." This is much more in accord with Bildad's reverent way of speaking of God.

7. **Thy beginning.** This refers to Job's condition before his affliction. **Thy latter end should greatly increase.** Bildad heartily believes the doctrine that goodness brings material prosperity in this life. He looks forward, if Job repents, to a material prosperity for Job which shall make all his former wealth seem insignificant.

(2) *The moral wisdom of the ancients*, 8:8–19

8. **Former age . . . fathers searched out.** Reverence for the past is deeply ingrained in most pious souls. It always seems that the ancients stood nearer than we to the fountain of wisdom, that they were endowed with superior intelligence, and that the cumulative experience of their lives we, whose lives cover but a span, have no right to question. This is the attitude of Bildad.

9. **Our days are a shadow.** Bildad thinks the individual has no right from his little bit of experience to question the accumulated experience of the ages.

10. **Out of their heart.** As the heart was one of the terms for the whole inner nature, including the mind, this is equivalent to saying that they will utter words out of their wisdom.

11. Can the [1] rush grow up without mire?
Can the [2] flag grow without water?
12. Whilst it is yet in its greenness, *and* not cut down,
It withereth before any *other* herb.
13. So are the [3] paths of all that forget God;
And the hope of the godless man shall perish:
14. Whose confidence shall [4] break in sunder,
And whose trust is a spider's [5] web.
15. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand:
He shall hold fast thereby, but it shall not endure.
16. He is green before the sun,

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[1] m. Or, *papyrus.* [2] m. Or, *reed-grass.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *latter end.* [4] m. Or, *be cut off.* [5] m. Or, *house.*

---

11. **Rush . . . flag.** These are both Egyptian words which the Hebrew has borrowed; it is better with the margin to render them "papyrus" and "reed-grass." Bildad begins here to quote actual samples of the wisdom of the ancients. This wise observation about cause and effect is clearly quoted from the Egyptians.

12. **In its greenness.** Before it begins to ripen and show signs of decay. **It withereth.** Lack of moisture is as fatal to it as the scythe.

13. **So are the paths.** Here the application of the figure begins. It is better to read with the three versions cited above, "the latter end." The transposition of two letters, and a slight change in another, made the difference.

14. **Spider's web.** As the margin shows, it is literally "spider's house." This makes the connection with v. 15 plain. Nothing is more fragile than a spider's web. This is a favorite simile in the East. Mohammed in the Coran, Sura 29:40, says: "the weakest of all houses is the house of the spider." It becomes a powerful simile of Bildad's view of the hope of the wicked.

15. **He shall hold fast thereby.** In order to support himself.

16. **He is green before the sun.** The poet returns now to the figure of a plant which he had begun in v. 11. The godless man is likened to a luxuriant plant growing in a garden.

And his shoots go forth over his garden.
17. His roots are wrapped [1] about the heap,
[2] He beholdeth [3] the place of stones.
18. If he be destroyed from his place,
Then it shall deny him, *saying*, I have not seen thee.
19. [4] Behold, this is the joy of his way,
And out of the [5] earth shall others spring.
20. Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,

---

[1] m. Or, *beside the spring*. [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *He lives*. [3] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. read *between* instead of *the place of*. [13] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Thus is the destruction of*. [5] Or, *dust*.

---

17. **About the heap.** This makes no sense, and it is better to read with the margin, "beside the spring." The Hebrew word used here means spring in Cant. 4 : 12. One of the greatest advantages a plant can have in the East is to have its roots beside a spring. **He beholdeth.** It is better to read with the versions cited above "He liveth." The reading is obtained by the change of one Hebrew letter, and gives us a much more vital meaning. **The place of stones.** The authorities cited above give a much better reading, "among the stones." Again it is obtained by the change of a single Hebrew letter. By the side of a spring a plant will flourish even in a rocky soil, and in Palestine all soil is rocky. Some, however, keep the Hebrew text of the phrase and translate "He lives in a house of stones," *i.e.* the stone house, above the spring. As plants do not flourish so well in a house, this does not seem so natural as the explanation first given.

18. **Then it shall deny him.** However luxuriant the plant, it passes away, leaving no trace. The place where it stood bears no witness to its ever having been there. This lack of testimony the poet vividly represents as denial.

19. **Behold, this is the joy of his way.** A far more powerful and appropriate conclusion to the figure is obtained, if, with the authorities cited above, we read: "Thus is the destruction of his way." Like the once flourishing plant, the sinner disappears in an absolute destruction, and out of the dust where he stood another rises. Such is Bildad's belief.

(3) *Bildad's summary*, 8 : 20–22

20. **God will not cast away a perfect man,** etc. This is the doctrine toward which Bildad has all along been aiming. It is

Neither will he uphold the evil-doers.
21. [1] He will yet fill thy mouth with laughter,
And thy lips with shouting.
22. They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame;
And the tent of the wicked shall be no more.

4. *Job's Reply to Bildad*, Chs. 9, 10

9. Then Job answered and said,
2. Of a truth I know that it is so:
[2] But how can man be just [3] with God?
3. [4] If he be pleased to contend with him,

---

[1] m. Or, *Till he fill.* [2] m. Or, *For.* [3] m. Or, *before.* [4] m. Or, *I should desire . . . he could not &c.*

---

identical with the doctrine of Eliphaz and assumes that Job has sinned.

21. **He will yet fill thy mouth with laughter.** In this verse the reading of the text is preferable to that of the margin. The verse expresses Bildad's exhortation to Job to repent and find joy. The exhortation is skilfully expressed as a conviction, because it was more tactful so to do.

22. **They that hate thee**, etc. By this expression Bildad implies that he and his friends are not of this number; they are Job's friends and well-wishers. **The wicked.** The wicked are skilfully identified with those who hate Job. Job is excluded from the number. Thus Bildad implies that Job, though he has merited chastisement, is not thoroughly bad, and thus seeks to lead him back to God.

(1) *God is so great and terrible that man cannot establish his innocence with him*, ch. 9

2. **I know that it is so.** These words refer back to Bildad's statement in 8:20:

"Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man."

The truth of this Job admits, but he asks: **How shall a man be just with God?** A man may be upright, as Job is conscious that he is; and yet, if God take a different view of the case, how is the man to establish his righteousness? This is Job's point of view. God is omnipotent, majestic, terrible, how shall puny man answer him?

3. **If he be pleased.** We should read with the margin, "If

He cannot answer him one of a thousand.
4. *He is* wise in heart, and mighty in strength:
Who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?
5. Which removeth the mountains, and [1] they know it not,
[2] When he overturneth them in his anger.
6. Which shaketh the earth out of her place,
And the pillars thereof tremble.
7. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not;
And sealeth up the stars.

---

[1] Syr. Ar. *he knows it not.*

[2] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. *And overturns.*

---

one should desire." **To contend.** The word is the technical term for entering upon a lawsuit. Such a suit involves questioning and cross-questioning. **He cannot answer him.** Man could not answer the puzzling questions that God would put. This is now Job's feeling, and it is interesting to note that later, when God does answer Job out of the whirlwind, his answer consists almost exclusively of questions to which man can give no answer.

4. **Wise in heart.** "Heart" here stands for the mind. **And prospered.** Literally "been well" or safe. We should say: "Who hath hardened himself against him with impunity?"

5. **Which removeth mountains.** We should render, "Who removeth mountains." The reference is to God. **They know it not.** We should read with the Syriac and Arabic, "he knows it not." The thought is that God is so powerful that he can remove a mountain without being conscious of it. **When he overturneth.** We should read with the versions cited above, "And he overturneth."

6. **Which shaketh the earth.** Better, "Who shaketh the earth." The verse is a poetical description of an earthquake. **The pillars thereof.** With many of the ancients the author, perhaps, believed that the earth rested upon pillars (Cf. Ps. 75:3), but this is apparently contradicted in 26:7.

7. **Which commandeth.** Again, "Who commandeth" is better. **The sun, and it riseth not.** Possibly the reference is to eclipses, but it is more probably to clouds and storms, which obscure the sun and make it seem not to have arisen. **He sealeth up the stars.** They were thought to remain in dwellings whence

8. Which alone stretcheth out the heavens,
And treadeth upon the [1] waves of the [2] sea.
9. Which maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,
And the chambers of the south.
10. Which doeth great things past finding out;
Yea, marvellous things without number.
11. Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not:
He passeth on also, but I perceive him not.
12. Behold, he seizeth *the prey*, who can [3] hinder him?

---

[1] m. Heb. *high places.* [2] 3 Heb. MSS. *clouds.* [3] m. Or, *turn him back.*

God brought them out to shine, calling them all by their names (see Isa. 40:26). The coming of clouds is here poetically called the sealing up of their dwellings.

8. **Which alone.** Better, "Who alone." **Waves of the sea.** There is a little manuscript authority for reading instead of "waves of the sea," "high places of the clouds." This would make the last clause synonymous with the first. "High places" is, however, a very poetic term for "waves," and as all the versions and most of the MSS. read "sea" we must retain the present text.

9. **Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades.** All scholars agree that the Hebrew terms refer to stars, but there is some uncertainty as to which constellations were meant. "The Bear" or Arcturus seems certain. The word rendered "Orion" literally means "fool," and is thought to refer to an old myth that a giant was bound in the sky. Perhaps the myth referred to Orion. The word rendered "Pleiades," if it is of Hebrew origin, means "heap," and is thought to refer to the "heap" of seven stars in the Pleiades. Some think, however, that the reference is to the dog star Sirius and find in 38:31 a reference to the chain by which the dog was held. To whatever stars reference is made, it is clear that the poet regards their creation as one of the evidences of God's greatness.

10. **Which.** "Who" is a better rendering. **Doeth great things.** The verse is quoted from Eliphaz in 5:9. Job, however, quotes it with a very different purpose.

11. **I see him not.** Because God is invisible and his activities are elusive, Job feels that they are the more terrible.

12. **He seizeth the prey.** God's actions are irresistible. Job likens them to the actions of a powerful beast of prey before which man is helpless.

Who will say unto him, What doest thou?
13. God will not withdraw his anger;
The helpers of [1] Rahab [2] do stoop under him.
14. How much less shall I answer him,
And choose out my words *to reason* with him?
15. [3] Whom, [4] though I were righteous, yet [5] would
I not answer;
I would make supplication to [6] mine adversary.

---

[1] m. Or, *arrogancy*. See Isa. 30:7.

m. Or, *did*.

[3] Gr. Syr. Sah. omit *whom*.

[4] Heb. *if*.

[5] Gr. Theod. Syr. Sah. Eth. *would I not be answered*.

[14] m. Or, *him that would judge me*. Gr. Sah. Eth. *his justice*.

---

13. **Helpers of Rahab**. These were the helpers which the mythical sea-monster of the Babylonian Creation poem created (see note on 3:8). These "helpers" were pictured in the following terms:

"monster-serpents,
Sharp of tooth and merciless of fang;
With poison instead of blood she filled their bodies.
Fierce monster-vipers she clothed with terror,
With splendor she decked them, made them lofty of stature.
Whoever beheld them, terror overcame him.
Their bodies reared up and none could withstand their attack."

(See King's *Seven Tablets of Creation*, Vol. II, p. 17). Job, replacing the Babylonian god by God, declares that even these mighty monster-like helpers of Rahab bowed under his power.

14. **How much less shall I answer him**. In striking contrast to these superhuman monsters is puny man. If they were helpless, how much more is he!

15. **Whom, though I were righteous**. The Hebrew text of the verse is corrupt. It should be corrected by the ancient authorities cited above so as to read:

"Though I were righteous, I should not be answered;
I should make supplication for his justice."

Job declares that God does not answer even the righteous. They cry, and he is silent. They have to supplicate even for his mere justice. It is a severe arraignment of God; but it shows the beginning in Job of a feeling that there should be an ethical quality in God. Might is, he feels, not right simply because it is omnipotent.

16. If I had called, and he [1] had answered me;
Yet would I not believe that he hearkened unto my voice.
17. [2] For he breaketh me with a tempest,
And multiplieth my wounds without cause.
18. He will not suffer me to take my breath,
But filleth me with bitterness.
19. [3] If *we speak* of the strength of the mighty, [4] lo, *he is there!*
And if of judgement, who will appoint me a time?

---

[1] The oldest Gr. MS. reads *he would not answer*. [2] m. Heb. *He who.* [3] m. Or, *If* we speak *of strength, lo* he is *mighty*. Gr. Sym. Syr. Sah. Ar. *he is mighty.* [4] m. Or, *Lo*, here am I, saith he; *and if of judgment, Who &c.*

---

16. **If I had called, and he had answered me.** The verse as it stands makes Job declare that if God really answered him, he would not believe his own experience of the answer. This seems impossible, even for a man in Job's condition. It is probable that, as one ancient authority shows, a "not" has fallen out of the text, and that we should translate the verse:

> "If I called, he would not answer me;
> I cannot believe that he would hear my voice."

This makes the verse a sane assertion and a continuation of the thought of the preceding verse.

17. **For he breaketh me with a tempest**, etc. Job's calamities had come upon him suddenly, like a whirlwind, and, so far as he could see, without cause. He declares, in his present mood, that such is God's usual course of action. This is his reason for believing that God will not hear him, or, indeed, any suppliant.

18. **Filleth me with bitterness.** A forcible exhibition of the sufferings which formed the basis of Job's judgment on the point under discussion.

19. **Of the strength of the mighty, lo, he is there!** The text should be amended with the versions (see above) and the margin, and we should translate: "If we speak of strength, he is mighty." Job acknowledges God's omnipotence. **Who will appoint me a time?** Job here recurs to the thought of v. 16. God is omnipotent, but he heeds no suppliant. Job accordingly asks, if we talk of judgment (*i.e.* of obtaining justice from God), who will secure an appointed meeting with him for the purpose?

20. Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me:
Though I be perfect,[1] it shall prove me perverse.
21. [2] I am [3] perfect; I regard not myself;
I despise my life.
22. It is all one; therefore I say,
He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
23. If the scourge slay suddenly,

---

[1] m. Or, *he*. [2] m. Or, *Though I be perfect, I will not regard &c.* [3] m. See ch. 1:1.

---

20. **Mine own mouth shall condemn me.** Job says that if such a meeting could be secured, and he were perfect, he would be so overawed by God's greatness that his own mouth would condemn him in spite of himself. This is just what happens, though in a different way than Job now means it, in 42:6.

21. **I am perfect.** The English would better reveal the force of the original if it read "Perfect I am." As Job speaks he undergoes a sudden revulsion of feeling. The consciousness of his innocence surges up, and he declares, "Perfect I am." **I regard not myself.** Job throws prudence to the winds. God is omnipotent; he may crush Job, if he will, but in the consciousness that he has not merited his present sufferings, Job suddenly declares that he will tell the truth as he sees it regardless of consequences. **I despise my life.** He means that he is not speaking as prudence would dictate, if he did regard it. The first clause of v. 22 should be attached to this verse. We should then obtain a full line:

"I despise my life; it is all one;"

i.e. it makes no difference what happens to him.

22. **It is all one.** See note on v. 21. **He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.** Having thrown prudence to the winds, Job speaks out his real thought, which is that in reality God destroys the perfect and wicked alike. If one looks to outward prosperity only, this often seems to be the case. **Therefore I say** is too short for a line. It should probably, as Duhm suggests, be omitted. As that leaves v. 22 but half a verse, he further suggests that the last line of v. 24, which has three lines, be transferred to this place. We then obtain the following complete verse:

"He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
If not he, then who is it?"

He will mock at the [1] trial of the innocent.
24. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked:
He covereth the faces of the judges thereof;
If *it be* not *he*, who then is it?
25. Now my days are swifter than a [2] post:
They flee away, they see no good.
26. They are passed away as the [3] swift ships:
As the eagle that swoopeth on the prey.
27. If I say, I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my *sad* countenance, and [4] be of good cheer:
28. I am afraid of all my sorrows,

---

[1] m. Or, *calamity*. [2] m. Or, *runner*. [3] m. Heb. *ships of reed*. [4] m. Heb. *brighten up*.

---

23. He will **mock at the trial of the innocent.** Many, when smarting under deep suffering, have, in the absence of clear faith in God, felt just as Job does here, that omnipotence simply makes sport of the tenderest feelings and acutest agonies of the heart.

24. **The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.** It is often hard for those in happier circumstances than Job not to feel thus. Cf. Ps. 73. If God is omnipotent, is he not responsible for this? It is this thought which makes Job say: **He covereth the faces of the judges.** *I.e.* so that they cannot discern justice. **If not he**, etc., should be transposed to the end of v. 22.

25. **My days are swifter than a post.** We should read with the margin "a runner." Job returns from his general indictment of God's government to bewail his own swiftly passing days. He likens them to a swift messenger, chosen for his fleetness in running. **They see no good.** Their hard experiences as well as their swiftness embitter them.

26. **Swift ships.** The margin renders "ships of reed." The reference is to papyrus boats with wooden keels which were used on the Nile. They were light and very swift. They are the "vessels of papyrus" of Isa. 18: 2. They are mentioned by Pliny and Lucan among ancient writers. Job, as he heaps up metaphors expressive of the brevity of life and the swiftness with which it passes, seizes upon these boats as an illustration.

28. **I am afraid of all my sorrows.** This is the conclusion to the condition expressed in the preceding verse. It is a fine pic-

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
29. I shall be condemned;
Why then do I labour in vain?
30. If I wash myself [1] with snow water,
And [2] make my hands never so clean;
31. Yet wilt thou plunge me in the [3] ditch,
And mine own clothes shall abhor me.
32. For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him,
That we should come together in judgement,
33. There is no [4] daysman betwixt us,

---

[1] m. Another ancient reading is, *with snow.* [2] m. Heb. *cleanse my hands with lye.* [3] Gr. Aq. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *mire.* [4] m. Or, *umpire.*

---

ture of the condition of a patient whose nerves are shattered. Moments of relief from suffering come, but the sufferer cannot then be cheerful because of the anticipation of the pain which is sure to return. **Thou wilt not hold me innocent.** Job does not recognize the action of general laws. All is in his view the direct activity of a personal God. Each pang is a stroke of God inflicted because God accounts him guilty.

29. **I shall be condemned.** Rather "be guilty." He means that God will account him guilty, and worthy of suffering, so why labor to establish his innocence?

30. **With snow water.** It is better with the margin to render "with snow." The whiteness of snow seems to have suggested to the poet that it had some special cleansing power.

31. **Plunge me in the ditch.** We should read with the versions cited above "in the mire." An Oriental ditch is often too dry to soil perceptibly the kind of clothing worn. The verse is a poetical way of saying emphatically what had already been said at the beginning of v. 29, viz. that God will hold him guilty.

32. **He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him.** Job here returns to the thought of God's greatness which he had powerfully described in vs. 3–10. He declares that there is no common ground of reasoning between the Omnipotent and a mere man; how then can Job be justified?

33. **There is no daysman between us.** The margin suggests "umpire" for "daysman." The Hebrew word means "judge." "Daysman," one who appoints a day for hearing a cause, originally signified a magistrate or "judge." Job feels that he has

That might lay his hand upon us both.
34. Let him take his rod away from me,
And let not his terror make me afraid:
35. Then would I speak, and not fear him;
For I am not so in myself.
10. My soul is weary of my life;
[1] I will give free course to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me;
Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

---

[1] Gr. Sah. *I will let loose unto him my complaint.*

---

been unjustly treated by God, but there is no one to act as judge between him and the Almighty.

34. **Let him take his rod away from me . . . let not his terror make me afraid.** He returns here to the thought of v. 20. The mere thought of the Omnipotent one frightens a man out of his self-command. Then, too, the terrible afflictions which Job suffered, which he, like his friends, regarded as the "rod of God," had unmanned him.

35. **For I am not so in myself.** This refers to his terror in God's presence. Job means that suffering and the sense of omnipotence might make him afraid, but he was not so in himself, *i.e.* he found no cause in consciousness of wrongdoing for such terror.

(2) *A new appeal that God would show how Job's sufferings are consistent with the divine nature*, ch. 10.

1. **My soul is weary of my life.** Job recurs to the attitude assumed in 7:15. His soul is weary of life; he longs for death. Compare 3:21. **I will give free course to my complaint.** It is better to read with the versions cited above, "I will let loose unto him my complaint." As in 9:21 Job throws prudence to the winds and, regardless of consequences, speaks out his innermost thought.

2. **Do not condemn me . . . show me wherefore**, etc. Again there emerges into conscious thought in Job's mind the feeling that there should be fairness in God, that simple omnipotence is not sufficient to hold the reverence of men. That God is man's ethical ideal is a conviction deeply implanted in the human heart. To this conviction religion owes its upward ethical evolution.

3. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress,
That thou shouldest despise the [1] work of thine hands,
And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?
4. Hast thou eyes of flesh,
Or seest thou as man seeth?
5. Are thy days as the days of man,
Or thy years as man's days,
6. That thou inquirest after mine iniquity,
And searchest after my sin,
7. Although thou knowest that I am not wicked;

---

[1] m. Heb. *labour*.

Job in his suffering begins to recognize the need of ethical qualities in God. The recognition led him to speak in a way which seemed to his friends to be blasphemous. Negative work always seems blasphemous, even though it proceed, as in Job's case, from convictions which are true and the recognition of which makes in the end for deeper reverence and better religion.

3. **That thou shouldest oppress . . . despise the work of thine hands . . . shine upon the counsel of the wicked.** This verse gives a fuller expression to the ethical defects in God's government of the world against which Job's heart was rebelling. The indictment of this government was Job's way of expressing the conviction that goodness should rule the world.

4. **Hast thou eyes of flesh**? etc. If God had human limitations, Job could understand why his government of the world should be so defective; it would be for lack of proper information.

5. **Are thy days as the days of man**? A man's life is short. When the oldest, he still has experienced but a little of life; he may accordingly make mistakes. If God's life were thus brief, Job could understand that his misgovernment of the world might come from inexperience.

6. **That thou inquirest after mine iniquity.** Job interprets his sufferings as tortures inflicted to wrest from him a confession. The verse taken in connection with vs. 4, 5 means that if God were ignorant and inexperienced like man, Job could understand why he should need to resort to such torture to gain information.

7. **Although thou knowest that I am not wicked.** The utterances of the preceding verses were mere suppositions. Job

And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand?
8. Thine hands have framed me and fashioned me
[1] Together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.
9. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast fashioned me as clay;
And wilt thou bring me into dust again?
10. Hast thou not poured me out as milk,
And curdled me like cheese?
11. Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh,
And knit me together with bones and sinews.

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *Afterward thou turnest about and destroyest me.*

---

cannot escape believing in God's omniscience. He knows that he is innocent; he feels sure that God knows it. The verse is in reality an appeal from God to God — from God's seeming government to God's ideal goodness. **There is none that can deliver out of thine hand.** As the clause stands it is an assertion of the all-powerfulness of God. In the development of the thought this comes in appropriately, since Job has just declared his faith in God's omniscience. It does not, however, make a good poetical parallelism to the first half of the verse. Duhm accordingly corrects to: "There is no iniquity in my hand." The versions, however, support the text as it stands.

8. **Together round about.** We should read with the versions, "Afterward thou turnest about. **Yet thou dost destroy me.** Read with the versions, "and destroyest me." To one who does not catch the moral purpose which lies behind life, it often seems as though God created on purpose to destroy. So it seemed to Job.

9. **Thou hast fashioned me as clay.** The figure is that of a potter who has spent infinite pains in bringing to perfection a beautiful vessel and who then wantonly shatters it. Job feels that God has created him by the expenditure of much time and skill, and now is by torture destroying prematurely his handiwork.

10. **Poured me out as milk.** The verse describes poetically the initial processes of procreation.

11. **Clothed me with skin and flesh.** The verse refers to the marvellous formation of the child in the womb.

12. Thou hast granted me life and favour,
And thy [1] visitation hath preserved my spirit,
13. Yet these things thou didst hide in thine heart;
I know that this *is* with thee:
14. If I sin, then thou markest me,
And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.
15. If I be wicked, woe unto me;
And if I be righteous, yet shall I not lift up my head;
[2] Being filled with ignominy
And looking upon mine affliction.
16. [3] And if *my head* exalt itself, thou huntest me as a lion:

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[1] m. Or, *care.* [2] m. Or, *I am filled with ignominy, but look thou, . . . for it increaseth: thou &c.* [3] Syr. Ar. *If I rise up.*

12. **Life and favour.** This is a reference to his birth. **Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.** It is God's constant care that has kept Job alive. A part of that care has been expended to keep his spirit cheerful and happy.

13. **Yet these things thou didst hide in thine heart.** "These things" refers to the things mentioned in the succeeding verses. While apparent prosperity and happiness were given to Job, God had these misfortunes in his mind for Job all the time — at least so Job thinks. **I know that this is with thee.** Better, "this was with thee." Job feels that it was all the time God's sinister purpose to destroy him. His former happiness but threw Job off his guard, so that the blow fell with the greater severity.

14. **Then thou markest me.** God notes every deviation from the path of righteousness. **Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.** Job feels that God is perfectly relentless. If one sins in the least, all is over; there is no forgiveness.

15. **If I be wicked.** This refers to greater and more heinous offences than "sin." **Shall I not lift up my head.** Sin condemns, but righteousness does not avert condemnation. So Job feels in his present mood. **And looking upon mine affliction.** Neither the text nor the margin gives a good sense. Several interpreters have suggested that the change of one Hebrew letter would give, "And saturated with affliction." This emendation should be adopted.

16. **If my head exalt itself.** The Hebrew has no word for

And again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.
17. Thou renewest [1] thy witnesses against me,
And increasest thine indignation upon me;
[2] Changes and warfare are with me.
18. Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?
I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me.
19. I should have been as though I had not been;
I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.
20. Are not [3] my days few? [4] cease then,

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[1] Gr. Sah. *upon me my stroke.* [2] m. Or, *Host after host is against me.* Better still with Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *Thou renewest a host against me.* [3] Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *the days of my life.* [4] m. Another reading, *let him cease and leave me alone.*

"my head" and it is better to read with the Syriac and Arabic versions, "If I rise up, thou huntest me as a lion." The verse continues the thought of the preceding verses in a slightly different form. Job thinks that if one raises himself a little too high, or walks a little too proudly, God takes pleasure in hunting him down. The thought is similar to that which underlies our phrase "tempting Providence."

17. **Thou renewest thy witnesses against me.** The versions quoted above give a better rendering: "Thou renewest upon me my stroke," *i.e.* my affliction. **Changes and warfare are with me.** Again it is better with the versions to read: "Thou renewest a host against me." The thought is that affliction after affliction comes upon him like the successive individuals of an attacking army.

18. **Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?** If God is so determined to destroy Job, why did he cause him to be born alive? The thought returns to the question of v. 9, though with different imagery.

19. **I should have been carried out of the womb to the grave.** In expanding in synonymous terms the thought of v. 18, he uses the figure employed in 3:11 ff.

20. **My days few.** Read with the versions cited above, "the days of my life." **Cease then.** These words are omitted by the versions, which read "the days of my life are few." As we fol-

And let me alone, that I may [1] take comfort a
little,

21. Before I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and of the shadow
of death;

22. A land of thick darkness, as darkness *itself*;
A land of the shadow of death, [2] without any
order,
And where the light is as darkness.

5. *Zophar's First Address*, Ch. 11

11. Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2. Should not the [3] multitude of words be answered?

---

[1] m. Heb. *brighten up*. [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *without brightness*. [3] Gr. Sym. Sah. Eth. *one who multiplies words*.

---

lowed that reading in the former clause, we omit this. **That I may take a little comfort.** Job's thought is that life is very brief, death means simply gloom in Sheol, the one chance he has for any happiness is in the fleeting days of a short life, and it is accordingly most cruel of God to fill those brief days with torture.

21. **Before I go whence I shall not return.** He means, to Sheol. In 7:9 Job had said:

> "He that goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more."

The thought is a very old one. In the Babylonian poem of *Ishtar's Descent* the underworld is called the "Land of No-Return." **The land of darkness.** This thought also goes back to Babylonia. In *Ishtar's Descent*, it is said of those in the underworld:

> "Light they see not; in darkness they dwell."

22. **Without any order.** The verse continues and impressively elaborates the thought of the preceding verses. These words "without any order" come in awkwardly and without meaning. We should by a very slight change in the Hebrew read with the versions cited above, "without brightness."

(1) *Would that God would answer Job*, 11:2–6

1. **Zophar the Naamathite.** See note on 2:11.

2. **Should not the multitude of words be answered?** We

And should a man full of talk be justified?
3. [1] Should thy boastings make men hold their peace?
And when thou mockest, [2] shall no man make thee ashamed?
4. For thou sayest, [3] My doctrine is pure,
And I am clean in [4] thine eyes.
5. But Oh that God would speak,
And open his lips against thee;
6. And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom,
[5] That it is manifold in effectual working!

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[1] Syr. Ar. *Concerning thy boastings should men, &c?* [2] Gr. Syr. Ar. Eth. *there is no one who restrains thee.* [3] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Ar. *My walk.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *his eyes.* [5] m. Or, *For sound wisdom is manifold.*

---

should read with the versions cited above, "Should not one who multiplies words," which makes the parallelism of the two parts of the verse synonymous. Job's long speech had irritated Zophar, and he begins his reply with impatient words.

3. **Thy boastings.** We should read with the Syriac and Arabic, "concerning thy boastings should men be silent?" Job had in his last speech asserted his innocence (see 9 : 21). It is to this that Zophar refers. Such a boast seems to him blasphemous. **When thou mockest.** Job's arraignment of the divine government in the preceding chapters naturally seemed to the friends mockery. **Shall no man make thee ashamed?** The versions cited above give a better meaning, "When thou mockest and there is no one to restrain thee."

4. **My doctrine is pure.** We should read with the versions cited, "My way is pure," *i.e.* my course of life is pure. **In thine eyes.** It is better to keep the reading of the Hebrew text, since Zophar is quoting what Job has said to God. Zophar is shocked that Job should dare to say "I am perfect" (9 : 21).

5. **Oh that God would speak.** Job had intimated (9 : 14 ff. and 32 ff.) that he longed to come face to face with God. Zophar devoutly wishes that he might, feeling sure that if he did, God would make Job understand that he is a sinner.

6. **Wisdom.** The wisdom of God, which orders human life. **Effectual working.** The word might be rendered "efficient

[1] Know therefore that God [2] exacteth of thee less
than thine iniquity deserveth.
7. [3] Canst thou by searching find out God?
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?
8. [4] It is high as heaven; what canst thou do?
Deeper than [5] Sheol; what canst thou know?
9. The measure thereof is longer than the earth,
And broader than the sea.
10. If he pass through, and shut up,
And [6] call unto judgement, then who can hinder him?

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Ar. Sah. Eth. *That thou mightest know that, &c.* [2] m. Or, *remitteth* (Heb. *causeth to be forgotten*) *unto thee of thine iniquity.* [3] m. Or, *Canst thou find out the deep things of God?* [4] m. Heb. *The heights of heaven.* Aq. Vulg. *Higher than heaven.* [5] m. Or, *the grave.* [6] m. Heb. *call an assembly.*

---

wisdom" or "abiding success." Zophar's thought is that God's wisdom has ordered the world in the wisest way for the achievement of the highest ends. **Know.** It is better with the versions to read "That thou mightest know." **Exacteth of thee.** The margin gives the better rendering. The thought is that God causes to be forgotten a part of Job's sins. This amounts to saying that less is exacted of Job than he deserves.

(2) *Zophar praises God's wisdom*, 11: 7–12

7. **Canst thou by searching find out God?** This translation hardly does justice to the Hebrew. The margin, "Canst thou find out the deep things of God?" is better. The Hebrew means "Canst thou find out what is to be explored of God?" *i.e.* canst thou understand his whole nature?

8. **It is high as heaven.** We should read with Aquila and the Vulgate, "It is higher than heaven." This brings it into accord with the phrases which follow. While Zophar leaves it undetermined whether he is speaking of God's nature or God's wisdom, it is probable from the context that he refers to the unsearchable character of God's wisdom.

10. **If he pass through.** Or as we might translate it "pass by." Zophar takes up Job's words in 9: 11, 12. **And shut up.** Arrest, or put in prison to await trial. **Call unto judgement.**

11. For he knoweth vain men:
He seeth iniquity also, [1] even though he consider it not.
12. [2] But vain man is void of understanding,
Yea, man is born *as* a wild ass's colt.
13. If thou [3] set thine heart aright,

---

[1] m. Or, *and him that considereth not.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *and does not overlook it.* Syr. Ar. *and he considers it.* [2] m. Or, *But an empty man will get understanding, when &c.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *purify thine heart.*

The margin gives the actual force of the Hebrew "call an assembly," but the text gives the real meaning, since judgments were reached in an assembly (see Pr. 5 : 14) and usually executed at once. **Who can hinder him?** Literally, "turn him back." They are the very words employed by Job in 9: 12.

11. **He seeth iniquity even though he consider it not.** This is according to the present pointing of the Hebrew text, but it puts into Zophar's mouth an improbable sentiment and is out of harmony with the context. The marginal rendering is hardly possible from the Hebrew. It is better to emend the text with the Gr. Sah. and Eth. so as to read "he does not overlook it."

12. **But vain man is void of understanding.** This rendering is hardly possible from the Hebrew. The verse is very difficult and many suggestions have been made. That in the margin is the most probable. According to this the verse reads:

> "And an empty man will get understanding
> When a wild ass's colt is born a man."

The verse forms a transition from Zophar's eulogy of God's wisdom to his exhortation to Job. God sees all iniquity, he argues; he never overlooks it; his punishments are severe; but foolish men, whatever the divine chastisements, never become wise.

(3) *Zophar's exhortation to Job*, 11 : 13–20

13. **If thou set thine heart aright.** Probably we should read with the versions cited above, "If thou purify thine heart." Zophar, like Eliphaz, closes his speech with an exhortation to Job to repent, promising him prosperity if he does. Since the argument has advanced considerably farther, and Zophar as he listened has become heated by the debate, he assumes Job's guilt in a more open manner than Eliphaz had done.

14. **If iniquity be in thine hand.** The verse assumes that Job is sinful and his house corrupt. Zophar exhorts him to show the

And stretch out thine hands toward him;
14. If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away,
And let not unrighteousness dwell in thy tents;
15. [1] Surely then shalt thou lift up thy face [2] without spot;
Yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:
16. For thou shalt forget thy misery;
Thou shalt remember it as waters that are passed away:
17. And *thy* life shall [3] be clearer than the noonday;
Though there be darkness, it shall be as the morning.
18. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope;

---

[1] Targ. *Surely then.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *Surely.* Syr. Ar. *then.* [2] Gr. Sah. Ar. *like water.*
[3] m. Or, *arise above.*

---

fruits of true repentance by self-reformation and the reformation of his household.

15. **Surely then.** The Hebrew means "For then." If we read "surely," we follow the Gr. Sah. and Eth. versions, but "surely then" is redundant, and we should choose between "surely" of the three versions just mentioned or "then" of the Syriac and Arabic. **Without spot.** This is better than the reading of some of the versions, "like water." **Shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear.** This refers to Job's description of his fluctuating feelings in 9 : 27, 28 and 10 : 15–17. Zophar thinks he has an adequate remedy for these varying states of feeling.

16. **Thou shall forget thy misery.** Zophar in this verse vividly portrays how effective his remedy will be.

17. **Though there be darkness**, etc. It is better with some of the versions to read: "Darkness shall be like morning." Perhaps the reference is to Job's description of the darkness of Sheol, 10 : 21 ff. In this case Zophar means that even Sheol is light to a good man. He may mean, however, that affliction is light because the good man is conscious that it is for his purification.

18. **Shalt be secure, because there is hope.** Zophar here touches upon a psychological fact; the feelings of security and cheerfulness arise out of one's attitude of mind. The verse

Yea, thou shalt search *about thee*, and shalt take thy rest in safety.
19. Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid;
Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.
20. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail,
And [1] they shall have no way to flee,
And their hope shall be the giving up of the ghost.

6. *Job's Reply to Zophar*, Chs. 12–14

12. Then Job answered and said,
2. No doubt but ye are the people,
And wisdom shall die with you.

---

[1] m. Heb. *refuge is perished from them.*

---

draws a contrast to Job's gloomy pictures of life in 7 : 6 ff., 9 : 27 ff., and 10 : 21 ff.

19. **Many shall make suit unto thee.** The weak, helpless, and hopeless are always appealing to the strong and peaceful for aid. Zophar declares that, if Job will follow his advice, Job's life will become so peaceful and strong that he shall be the recipient of such appeals.

20. **The eyes of the wicked shall fail.** Like Bildad (8 : 22), Zophar closes his speech with a picture of the punishment of the wicked. Unlike Bildad, however, Zophar implies that Job may be among those who will be thus punished.

(1) *Job's ironical remarks on the wisdom of his friends*, 12 : 1–6

2. Job begins with one of the finest examples of irony: **No doubt but ye are the people.** The word "people" is commonly taken to be equivalent to "everybody." Some have conjectured that the original reading was "the men who know" and that by the accidental erasure of two letters it became "people." If we could read:

"No doubt but ye are they who have knowledge,
And wisdom will die with you,"

we should have a better parallelism. This certainly is the thought even if we keep the word "people," which has the support of the

3. But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you:
Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?
4. I am as one that is a laughing-stock to his neighbour,
A man that called upon God, and he answered him:
The just, the perfect man is a laughing-stock.
5. In the thought of him that is at ease there is contempt for misfortune;

MSS. and versions, for it would mean, "doubtless you are everybody — you sum up the entire experience of the race — and when you die wisdom will have vanished."

3. **I am not inferior to you.** These words are omitted by the Gr. Sah. and Eth. As several scholars have perceived, they have crept in here from 13:2. If we omit them, the verse becomes much stronger, reading:

> "But I have understanding as well as you,
> And who knoweth not such things as these?"

The last clause continues the irony of v. 2. The boasted wisdom of the friends is after all but the common knowledge of mankind.

4. **I am as one that is a laughing-stock to his neighbour.** Job keenly feels the injustice of the remarks of his friends. They have so signally failed to diagnose his case and to enter into sympathy with him that he feels that they are mocking him. This is especially true of Zophar, who in his address more openly assumed Job's guilt than either of the previous speakers had done. **A man that called upon God, and he answered him.** We might better translate, "A man who calls upon God and he answers him." The line is a sarcastic reference to Zophar, the "neighbor" referred to in the previous line. Job had declared "If I called upon him, he would not answer me" (9:16 emended text), and he now ironically says that the self-righteous Zophar is "a man that calls upon God and he answers him." **The just and the perfect man.** This is a reference to Job himself, and is an assertion of his innocence against the imputations of Zophar.

5. **There is contempt for misfortune.** The clause means that the prosperous despise the unfortunate, attributing their misfortunes to some fault of their own. The Hebrew is difficult and the poetical balance of the clauses imperfect, but none of the emenda-

It is ready for them whose foot slippeth.
6. The tents of robbers prosper,
And they that provoke God are secure;
[1] Into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly.*
7. But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:
8. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee;

---

[1] m. Or, *That bring* their *god in their hand.*

tions proposed are improvements. **It is ready for them whose foot slippeth.** In Job's time, as now, the world was ready to kick a man when he is down.

6. **The tents of robbers prosper**, or "are at ease." Job, in his consciousness of innocence, is led to color his reply by his resentment of Zophar's criticism. In denial of Zophar's doctrine of rewards and punishments, Job declares that it is the

> "Tents of the wicked that are at ease,
> And they that provoke God are secure."

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly. We should read with the margin, "That bringeth their god in their hand," *i.e.* who worship their own power. For a similar assertion cf. Hab. 1 : 11 with Hab. 1 : 16.

(2) *All creation testifies to God's almighty sway*, 12 : 7–12

7. **But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.** Such rudimentary wisdom as the friends have been uttering is, Job declares, not the property of men only, but even of animals. The passage is poetry, but it must be remembered that the ancients did not draw as sharp a line between the animal and the human intelligence as we do. This verse and the next are quoted in the fragment of "Sayings of Jesus," found at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt in 1903. See Grenfell and Hunt, *New Sayings of Jesus*, Oxford University Press, 1904, p. 15.

8. **Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee.** Although this reading is supported by all the versions, it is the almost unanimous opinion of recent commentators that some word has fallen out of the text. After asking the "beasts" and "birds" in v. 7 and before asking the "fishes" in the last clause of this verse, one would expect a reference to reptiles; and it is probable that the original text read "creeping things of the earth," and that the word for "creeping things" was accidentally omitted in an

And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
9. Who knoweth not [1] in all these,
That the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?
10. In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,
And the [2] breath of all mankind.
11. Doth not the ear try words,
Even as the palate tasteth its meat?
12. [3] With aged men is wisdom,
And in length of days understanding.

---

[1] m. Or, *by*. [2] m. Or, *spirit*. [3] m. Or, *with aged men*, ye say, *is wisdom*.

---

early copy. This difficulty was felt in the "Sayings of Jesus" just referred to, for it makes the clause read "the beasts which are under the earth and upon the earth." At all events the "earth" cannot speak, and if we supply "creeping things" we obtain the four classes of the brute creation mentioned in Gen. 1.

9. **Who knoweth not in all these.** If we keep the reading "**in**," the question means, "Who among all these animals does not know?" If with the margin we read "by," it means "Who is so ignorant as not to know by all these examples?" Compare Isa. 41 : 20. **Hath wrought this.** *I.e.* this work that you refer to. Job apparently says, "Who is so ignorant, Zophar, as not to know that God does such things as you say?"

10. **In whose hand is the soul of every living thing.** This verse completes the thought of v. 9. Zophar's remarks simply amount to this, that God is the absolute sovereign of all. To Job such a thought is an axiom so self-evident as to be unworthy of mention.

11. **Doth not the ear try words?** The verse is, like Luke 12 : 57, an assertion of the inherent ability and right of the individual to discriminate between the false and true in what he hears. Job asserts this right in view of the doctrine from the ancients which his friends were forcing upon him.

12. **With aged men is wisdom.** This cannot represent Job's own opinion, as it is inconsistent with the preceding verse. The margin suggests the insertion of "ye say," making it the opinion of the friends. It is simpler to read the verse as a question,

"Is wisdom with aged men,
And understanding in length of days?"

The positive question is rhetorically equivalent to a negative assertion.

13. With him is wisdom and might;
He hath counsel and understanding.
14. Behold, he breaketh down, and [1] it cannot be built again;
He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.
15. Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up;
Again, he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.
16. With him is strength and [2] effectual working;
The deceived and the deceiver are his.

---

[1] m. Gr. Syr. OLat. Sah. Ar. Eth. *who shall build up?* [2] m. Or, *sound wisdom.*

---

(3) *None can resist God's might*, 12 : 13–25

13. **With him is wisdom and might.** *I.e.* with God. In contrast to the lack of wisdom among men implied in the preceding question Job asserts that wisdom in all its varieties and might belongs to God.

14. **And it cannot be built again.** We should read with the versions cited above, "who shall build it up?" Again the positive question is equivalent to a negative assertion. While Job acknowledges God's wisdom, he insists in this and the following verses especially upon God's absolute power. This insistence Job does not mean altogether as praise. In his present mood it is one of the sore points with him, that God exercises this absolute power in a way that seems to Job arbitrary.

15. **Behold, he withholdeth the waters.** Droughts and floods seem to Job exhibitions of the arbitrary power of God. He apparently felt that these occurrences were proofs that God knew how to do such things, but that a moderate continuous water supply would be more intelligible to man's understanding.

16. **Effectual working.** The phrase means, perhaps, "abiding success," see note on 5 : 12. Job means that God has power, and continually succeeds in achieving his ends. **The deceived and the deceiver are his.** *I.e.* God is responsible for them both. This is the point of view of the Hebrew prophets. Amos says: "Shall evil befall a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (3 : 6), and the Second Isaiah, "I make peace and create evil; I am the Lord, that doeth all these things" (Isa. 45 : 7).

17. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled,
And judges maketh he fools.
18. He looseth the bond of kings,
And bindeth their loins with a girdle.
19. He leadeth priests away spoiled,
And overthroweth the mighty.
20. He removeth the speech of the trusty,
And taketh away the understanding of the elders.
21. He poureth contempt upon princes,
And looseth the belt of the strong.
22. He discovereth deep things out of darkness,

---

17. **He leadeth counsellors away spoiled.** The thought of the verse is that God outwits the wisdom of crafty counsellors, and makes the insight of the most astute judges appear foolish. The parallelism between the two parts of the verse is not close and the first line is suspiciously like the beginning of v. 19. This has led some scholars to emend the text to "He makes foolish the counsellors of the earth." As the versions support the present text with great unanimity, there does not seem sufficient warrant for so drastic a change.

18. **He looseth the bond of kings.** *I.e.* the bond imposed by kings; he frees their prisoners, liberates the captives they have taken in war, or exempts provinces from taxes which they have imposed by dissolving the power of the kings themselves. **With a girdle.** Since to bind with a girdle is usually a synonym for strength, and such an idea is out of harmony with the context here, we should with several scholars change one letter of the Hebrew and read "with a fetter." The thought would then be, "He brings the kings themselves into bondage."

19. **He leadeth priests away spoiled.** Priests were an important and powerful order in ancient Israel, and in older civilizations, like those of Egypt and Babylonia, they were still more important, sometimes stepping from the priesthood to the throne. It is quite natural, therefore, that they should be mentioned in this connection.

20. **Speech of the trusty.** Sagacious and eloquent men, such as propose measures and persuade a people to carry them out.

21. **He poureth contempt upon princes.** Quoted in Ps. 107:40.

22. **He discovereth deep things out of darkness.** The verse apparently means that there is no secret so deeply hidden that

And bringeth out to light the shadow of death.
23. He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them:
He spreadeth the nations abroad, and [1] bringeth them in.
24. He taketh away the heart of the chiefs of the [2] people of the [3] earth,
And causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.
25. They grope in the dark without light,
And he maketh them to [4] stagger like a drunken man.
13. Lo, mine eye hath seen [5] all *this*,

---

[1] m. Or, *leadeth them away*. [2] Gr. Syr.-Hex. Sah. Eth. omit *people*. [3] m. Or, *land*. [4] m. Heb. *wander*. [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *these;* 12 Heb. MSS. 1 Gr. MSS. OLat. Vulg. Syr. Ar. *all these*.

God cannot penetrate it — no darkness so deep but that he can see through it.

23. **He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them.** The rise and fall of nations constitute one of the mysteries of history. It fascinated our poet as it has many others. He declares this to be explicable only as a manifestation of God's sovereign purpose.

24. **He taketh away the heart.** The heart here, as often in the Old Testament, stands for the intellect. **Chiefs of the people of the earth.** With the authorities cited above we should read, "chiefs of the land." The verse continues the thought of the preceding. One of the causes why nations are destroyed is the folly of their rulers. That such folly could exist was due, this monotheist declares, to the will of God. **Wander in a wilderness.** The word rendered "wilderness" means rather "chaos." It is the word rendered "waste" in Gen. 1:2. It is equivalent to saying, "He causeth them to wander in utter confusion." This half verse is quoted in Ps. 107:40.

28. **He maketh them to stagger.** As the margin shows, the word is the same that was in the preceding verse rendered "wander." Their activity continues, but it is without purpose or effectiveness. The comparison to a drunken man is used in Ps. 107:27, but there with a verb which properly means stagger.

(4) *Job holds his own attitude toward God's government to be better than that of his friends*, 13:1–12

1. **Mine eye hath seen all this.** From the general description of the intelligence and power manifested in God's works, Job

Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
2. What ye know, *the same* do I know also:
[1] I am not inferior unto you.
3. Surely I would speak to the Almighty,
And I desire to reason with God.
4. But ye are forgers of lies,
[2] Ye are all physicians of no value.
5. Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace!
And it should be your wisdom.
6. Hear now [3] my reasoning,

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[1] Gr. Sym. Syr. Sah. Eth. Targ. Ar. *And I am not.* [2] Gr. Syr. Sym. Sah. Vulg. Targ. Eth. Ar. *And ye.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the argument of my mouth.*

---

passes to an assertion of his own knowledge of them and attitude toward them.

2. **What ye know, the same do I know.** Job regards the air of superiority which his friends have assumed as entirely out of place.

3. **Surely I would speak to the Almighty.** Instead of "surely," we should translate, "But I would speak to the Almighty." Although Job knows God's might and the marvels of God's works as well as his friends, he persists that it is with God that he wishes to speak and not with these self-appointed advocates.

4. **Forgers of lies.** The word rendered "forgers" is literally "plasterers." Probably the meaning is that the friends seek by their false statements to smear over and cover up the real nature of life and of God's government of the world. **Physicians of no value.** The friends sought to act as healers of Job's spiritual ills, but they had proven so clumsy and short-sighted in their diagnosis of his troubles that he declares that they have no value as healers.

5. **Hold your peace . . . it should be your wisdom.** The friends have spoken volubly of wisdom, but Job apparently regards all that they have said as an exhibition of folly. His remark here suggests the proverb:

"Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise;
When he shutteth his lips, he is esteemed as prudent."
(Pr. 17:28.)

6. **My reasoning.** We should read with the versions cited above, "the argument of my mouth." This makes a perfect parallelism between the two parts of the verse.

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.
7. Will ye speak unrighteously for God,
And talk deceitfully for him?
8. Will ye [1] respect his person?
Will ye contend for God?
9. Is it good that he should search you out?
Or as one [2] deceiveth a man, will ye [3] deceive him?
10. He will surely reprove you,
If ye do secretly [4] respect persons.
11. Shall not [5] his excellency make you afraid,

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[1] m. Or, *shew him favour.* [2] m. Or, *mocketh.* [3] m. Or, *mock.* [4] m. Or, *shew favour.* Sym. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *respect his person* or *show him favor.* [5] Gr. Sym. Syr. Sah. Vulg. Ar. Eth. *his devastation.*

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7. **Speak unrighteously for God.** The verse explains the meaning of v. 4.

8. **Will ye respect his person?** The phrase is one that is used of judges who pervert judgment in favor of those who can make it of financial advantage to the judge. Job regards the question between him and God as a question of fairness and justice. It seems to him that a fair-minded person could give a verdict only in one way, but because God is so great and all-powerful he hints that the friends will curry favor with him by urging that which violates their own estimates of what is just. **Contend for God.** The word in the Hebrew which corresponds to "contend" is the one employed to designate a special plea as in a court of law. The idea is "Will you become special pleaders for God?"

9. **Is it good?** That is, will it be good for you, to have God search you out and unmask your pretended reverence, which is only sycophancy. **As one deceiveth a man, will ye deceive him?** We should read as in the margin "mocketh." A man can be fooled by flattery, but such deception is really a mockery of his manhood. Will you thus mock God, Job asks. The question implies, of course, that God cannot thus be mocked.

10. **If ye do secretly respect persons.** We should read with the versions cited above, "respect his person." Job declares that God's love of justice is so great that he will reprove partiality shown even to himself.

11. **His excellency.** We should read with the versions cited above, "his devastation." The reference is to such works of God

And his dread fall upon you?
12. Your memorable sayings *are* proverbs of ashes,
Your defences *are* defences of clay.
13. Hold your peace, [1] let me alone, that I may speak,
And let come on me what will.
14. [2] Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth,
And put my life in mine [3] hand?
15. [4] Though he slay me, yet will I wait for him:

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[1] Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. omit *let me alone*. [2] m. Or, *At all adventures I will take &c.* [3] 5 Heb. MSS. 1 Gr. MS. Syr. Vulg. Eth. *hands*. [4] m. Or, *Behold he will slay me; I wait for him*, or, according to another reading, *I will not wait*, or, *I have no hope*.

---

as Job has described in 12:17–25. Job was greatly impressed with the terrors of God. In his longing to come face to face with God he begged that God's more awful aspects might not overcome him, see below, v. 21 and 9:34. Even in modern times something of the ancient point of view finds expression in the lines:

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform,
> He plants his footsteps in the sea
> And rides upon the storm."

Make you afraid. Job wonders that in the danger of exciting God's terrors his friends can dare to be so insincere.

12. **Memorable sayings.** The traditional maxims with which they had tried to silence Job. **Proverbs of ashes.** These sayings are so out of touch with reality, that Job declares that they are like the ashes of burnt wood or the dust of the dead. Like the world in which they seemed to be true, there is no life in them.

(5) *Job will speak his mind to God*, 13:13–22

13. **Let me alone.** Several versions, as cited above, omit these words, and the poetry is improved by their omission. **Let come on me what will.** Job's mood again becomes desperate, and as in 9:19 ff. he throws prudence to the winds and speaks out his mind.

14. **Wherefore should I take?** We should read with the margin, "At all adventures I will take." The verse expresses in another way Job's fixed resolution to speak out regardless of consequences.

15. **Though he slay me.** The Hebrew does not mean this. We should read with the margin, "Behold he will slay me." **Yet**

Nevertheless I will [1] maintain my ways before him.
16. [2] This also shall be my salvation;
[3] For a godless man shall not come before him.
17. Hear diligently my speech,
And [4] let my declaration be in your ears.
18. Behold now, I have ordered my cause;
I know that I [5] am righteous.
19. Who is he that will contend with me?
For now [6] shall I hold my peace and give up the ghost.

---

[1] m. Heb. *argue.* [2] m. Or, *He.* [3] m. Or, *That.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *I will make a declaration.* [5] m. Or, *shall be justified.* [6] m. Or, *if I hold my peace, I shall give up &c.*

---

will I wait for him. The context requires that we read with the second suggestion of the margin, "I have no hope." The verse is a further statement of Job's reckless determination to speak regardless of consequences. He has no hope that God will not crush him like a moth, but nevertheless he will give a defence of himself and his course in life.

16. **This also shall be my salvation.** In spite of all of Job's sorrow and suffering and in spite of all the harsh things which in some moods he says about God, his faith in the unswerving justice of God remains. Even conduct which the orthodoxy of the day regarded as blasphemous would contribute to his salvation, he believed, because God is the God of truth and sincerity. This sublime confidence in the unswerving fairness of God is one of the fine touches of the poem.

18. **I know that I am righteous.** We should read with the margin, "I know that I shall be justified." Job has declared his readiness to plead his case against God. He is ready with his arguments, and expresses his confidence that he will be justified.

19. **Who is he that will contend with me?** The question means, "Is there any one that will contest my righteousness?" As in Isa. 50: 8 it is asked in the firm confidence that there is no one who can do so. **For now I should hold my peace.** Neither the text nor the margin gives the exact idea. Job says, "For then I should hold my peace and die," *i.e.* if any one should appear to argue against me.

20. Only do not two things unto me,
Then will I not hide myself from thy face:
21. Withdraw thine hand far from me;
And let not thy terror make me afraid.
22. Then call thou, and I will answer;
Or let me speak, and answer thou me.
23. How many are mine iniquities and sins?
Make me to know [1] my transgression and my sin.
24. Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And holdest me for thine enemy?

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *what they are.*

20. **Only do not two things unto me.** The two things are specified in the following verses, and are identical with those mentioned in 9:34.

21. **Withdraw thine hand far from me.** A synonym for, "Let him take his rod away from me" (9:34). The last half of the verse is identical with the last half of 9:34.

22. **Then call thou, and I will answer.** Freed from the overmastering terror of the omnipotence of God, Job believes that he could answer any plea that God could make against him, or, as the last clause of the verse shows, put in a plea for God to answer.

(6) *Job asks with what sins he is charged*, 13:23–28

23. **How many are mine iniquities and sins?** All recent commentators have noticed that the diction of the verse is bad. The word "sin" comes into each half of it in a way far more offensive to the ear in the Hebrew than in English. The versions cited above omit two of the words for transgression, and suggest that the verse read originally:

> "How great is my transgression?
> And my sin — make me know it."

This is the beginning of Job's plea or defence of himself.

24. **Wherefore hidest thou thy face?** The verse refers to God's general treatment of Job in his afflictions. It was the belief of the time that God hid his face from those who sinned, and that he punished them as enemies. Job is conscious that he has not sinned. The friends are sure that he has or he would not

25. Wilt thou harass a driven leaf?
[1] And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?
26. For thou writest bitter things against me,
And makest me to inherit the iniquities of my youth:
27. Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and markest all my paths;
Thou drawest thee a line about the soles of my feet:

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Ar. Eth. *Or.*

---

be subjected to such suffering. Puzzled by the situation, Job asks in v. 23 how great his sin is, and in this verse, why it is that God has hidden his face.

25. **A driven leaf . . . dry stubble.** These are emblems of Job's insignificance as compared with God. He wonders that God should take the trouble to buffet anything so small.

26. **Thou writest bitter things.** Another way of saying, "Thou prescribest bitter things"; compare Isa. 10:1, and Hos. 8:12. **Iniquities of my youth.** Job acknowledges that in the ardor and inexperience of youth he had done wrong, though he is conscious of no sin in manhood. Such sins on the part of youth men are apt to condone. Job regards God's treatment of him as especially severe because he supposes that these sins of thoughtless inexperience are remembered. In no other way can he account for his present calamities.

27. **Puttest my feet in the stocks.** If "stocks" is to be taken in the ordinary sense, the statements contained in the rest of the verse would be meaningless, unless it refers to a different time, which is improbable. "Stocks," which is in Hebrew in the singular, probably refers to a block of wood chained to a captive's foot to impede his movements. **Markest all my paths.** *I.e.* prescribest the limits of my movements and watchest me like a prisoner to see that I do not overstep them. **Soles of my feet.** As the line stands it is a synonym of the preceding phrase. The Hebrew is literally, "the roots of my feet"—a very unusual expression. Commentators have suggested many emendations to make the text accord with more ordinary ways of saying things, but as the present reading is a possible metaphor for a poet, and is supported by the versions, it seems better to let it stand.

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28. [1] Though I am like a rotten thing that consumeth,
Like a garment that is moth-eaten.
14. Man that is born of a woman
Is of few days, and full of trouble.
2. He [2] cometh forth like a flower, and [3] is cut down:
He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.
3. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one,
And bringest [4] me into judgement with thee?
4. [5] Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
not one.

---

[1] m. Heb. *And he is like.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *springeth up.* [3] m. Or, *withereth.* Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *falleth.* [4] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. *him.* [5] m. Or, *Oh that a clean thing could come out of an unclean! not one* can. 1 Heb. MS. omits the verse.

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28. **Though I am like.** The Hebrew, as the margin suggests, is, "And he (or it) is like." This makes no sense where it stands. The verse has probably been accidentally misplaced. If we insert it after 14:2, we gain an excellent meaning for it, and also relieve the situation here.

(7) *The brevity of man's days*, 14:1–6

1. **Born of woman.** Orientals regard woman as the frailer and weaker vessel. Hebrews believed that sin and death entered the world through her (cf. Gen. 3:16 and Ecclus. 25:24). The thought recurs in Job in 15:14 and 25:4. The phrase is introduced here as a partial explanation of the brevity and trouble of human life.

2. **He cometh forth like a flower.** We should with the versions cited above read, "He springeth up like a flower." Human life in its bright promise and its tragic end is likened to the rapid growth of a bright flower, which is soon cut off. As noted above, 13:28 probably belongs here. If so, the comparison went on:

> "He wastes away like a rotten thing,
> Like a garment that is moth-eaten."

3. **Upon such an one.** It seems strange to Job that the eternal God should so closely watch one so frail. **Bringest me into judgement.** We should read with the versions cited, "bringest him into judgment," *i.e.* frail man. While Job has himself in mind, he keeps up the figure.

4. **Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?** We should

5. Seeing his days are determined, the number of
his months is with thee,
And thou hast appointed his bounds that he
cannot pass;
6. Look away from him, that he may [1] rest,
Till he shall [2] accomplish, as an hireling, his day.
7. For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down,
that it will sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

---

[1] m. Heb. *cease.* [2] m. Or, *have pleasure in.*

---

read as in the margin, "Oh that a clean thing could come out of an unclean! not one can." It is impossible to connect the verse with its context. It is no doubt the sigh of a pious reader which was scribbled on the margin and afterward copied into the text. With the MS. noted above and several modern commentators, we omit it.

5. **Seeing his days are determined.** This connects directly with v. 3. Job wonders that God should watch man so carefully or care what he does, for man's days are determined, the bounds of his activity are set, and what can he do to God?

6. **Look away from him that he may rest.** To the inevitable agonies of life there is added, Job feels, the torture of being watched by God. Cf. for the thought Ps. 39:13. **Accomplish as an hireling his day.** For "accomplish" we should read, as in the margin, "take pleasure in." The hireling has a hard and lonely lot. His master cares only to get from him all the work he can for his wages; there is no personal bond of affection. If he is not watched by the taskmaster, however, the hireling can loiter along and get some little pleasure. Such enjoyment Job thinks God ought not to begrudge man in this work-a-day world.

(8) *Trees are more immortal than men*, 14:7–12

7. **There is hope of a tree.** The reason for this hope follows. **If it be cut down, that it will sprout again.** It is still the custom near Damascus to cut down old fig trees, walnut and pomegranate trees, and vines, and let the roots sprout again. This custom gives to the tree a kind of immortality. Job had compared man to a flower. Perhaps he means to suggest here that in justice man ought to share the immortality of the vegetable world as he shares its brevity of life.

8. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground;
9. Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
And put forth boughs like a plant.
10. But man dieth, and [1] wasteth away:
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, [2] and where is he?
11. [3] *As* the waters [4] fail from the sea,
And the river decayeth and drieth up;
12. So man lieth down and riseth not:
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.

---

[1] m. Or, *lieth low.*
[2] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth, Ar. *and is no more.*
[3] m. See Isa. 19:5.
[4] m. Heb. *are gone.*

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9. **Like a plant.** That is, like a fresh new plant.

10. **Wasteth away.** Not even the margin gives the exact shade of thought of the Hebrew. We should render, "Man dieth and falleth prostrate." The comparison with the tree is continued. **And where is he?** We should read with the versions cited above, "and is no more." It is a part of the running comparison with the tree. If the tree is cut down, its root sprouts, but Job declares:

> "Man dieth and falleth prostrate,
> Yea he giveth up the ghost and is no more."

The striking contrast intensifies the hard lot of mankind.

11. **Waters fail from the sea.** "Sea" is used as in Arabic of an inland lake or pool or even a large laver (1 Kgs. 7:23 ff.), as well as of a real sea. Here it has this limited meaning. Comparison has often been made, as the margin indicates, with Isa. 19:5, where we have almost the same words applied to the Nile, and several scholars think the words have been introduced into the text of Job from that passage. The words are in a much more natural context here than in Isaiah, and, if there has been any borrowing, it was probably on the part of the other writer. **River decayeth.** The word "river" is also used figuratively for the Palestinian streams which dry up in summer.

12. **Till the heavens be no more.** That is, never. The heavens were regarded as eternal, see Ps. 89:29.

13. Oh that thou wouldest hide me in [1] Sheol,
That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past,
That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!
14. If a man die, [2] shall he live *again?*
All the days of my warfare [3] would I wait,
Till my [4] release should come.
15. [5] Thou shouldest call, and I would answer thee:

---

[1] m. Or, *the grave.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *and live* again. [3] m. Or, *will . . . shall come.* [4] m. Or, *change.* [5] m. Or, *Thou shalt call and I will &c.*

(9) *Job longs for life after death,* 14:13–17

13. **Hide me in Sheol.** "Sheol" is the Hebrew name for the underworld. In it the dead were thought to live half-animate, cheerless existences. Job has already described it in 3:13–19 and 10:21, 22. Other descriptions are found in Isa. 14:9 ff. and Eze. 32:21–32. The Babylonian conception is portrayed in the poem of "Ishtar's Descent"; the Egyptian, in Steindorf's *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians,* p. 126 ff.; the Greek, in the eleventh book of the Odyssey. **Keep me secret until thy wrath is past.** Sheol with its gloom would be a welcome retreat, if God would ever change his attitude toward man and afford him hope. **Remember me.** Job, after strenuously denying another life for man, passes to the expression of passionate longing for it.

14. **Shall he live again?** As the sentence stands it interrupts the context. If we read "and live again" with the versions cited above (and the change affects but a single letter of the Hebrew), the connection of the thought is restored. Job says in substance: "If, when a man dies, he was to live again," etc. **All the days of my warfare.** Life is figuratively spoken of as a campaign. All its hardships Job would cheerfully bear were there but hope of release. **My release should come.** The reading of the text is to be preferred to the margin. Job is thinking of his release from the campaign, and the Hebrew word suggests the return to one's house from such service.

15. **Thou shouldest call.** Job has expressed the thought in v. 13 that God's punishments are due to his inexplicable anger. It is, like most of our human conceptions of God, a piece of anthropomorphism. In men such anger usually passes, and a more

Thou wouldest have a desire to the work of thine hands.
16. But now thou [1] numberest my steps:
Dost thou not watch over my sin?
17. My transgression is sealed up in a bag,
And thou fastenest up mine iniquity.
18. And surely the mountain falling [2] cometh to nought,
And the rock is removed out of its place;

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[1] Syr. Ar. *wouldst not number*. [2] m. Heb. *fadeth away*.

---

tender and penitent mood follows. Job hopes that there may be such a change in God's attitude. He is not certain of it, and the translation of the text is to be preferred to that of the margin. But if Job were hidden in Sheol, and God should ever yearn for him and call him, then Job would answer. **The work of thine hands.** Job is, after all, God's creature. The fact is mentioned to touch God's heart. Even the Almighty should have a tender feeling for his own handiwork.

16. **But now thou numberest my steps.** It is probable that Budde and Peake are right in thinking that vs. 16, 17 continue the description of the ideal relations between God and Job, which might exist in a future life. We should accordingly adopt the reading of the versions cited above and translate:

> "For then thou wouldst not number my steps,
> Nor watch over my sin."

17. **Is sealed up.** On the view of the passage just expressed we should render "would be sealed up." **Thou fastenest up.** The word means literally "glued over." It is usually taken to mean that Job's transgressions are fastened up for safe keeping against the day of judgment. "Glued over" or smeared over might also mean "hidden," "palliated," or "forgotten." On the view taken above of these verses, it should be understood in one of these senses.

(10) *The hopelessness of such longing*, 14 : 18–22

18. **And surely.** We should translate simply "But." This word forms the transition to the strong adversative contrast from the ideal picture of the preceding verses to the stern reality. **Mountain . . . rock.** If the unchanging mountains and firm rocks are removed, how little hope is there for frail man!

19. The waters wear the stones;
The overflowings thereof wash away the dust of the earth:
And thou destroyest the hope of man.
20. Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth;
Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.
21. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not;
And they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.
22. [1] But his flesh upon him hath pain,
And his soul within him mourneth.

7. *The Second Speech of Eliphaz*, Ch. 15

15. Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
2. Should a wise man make answer with [2] vain knowledge,

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[1] m. Or, *Only for himself his flesh hath pain, and for himself his soul mourneth.* [2] m. Heb. *knowledge of wind.*

---

19. **The overflowings thereof.** The Hebrew is difficult. Probably we should adopt a slight change in it suggested by Budde, and read "waterspouts." **And thou destroyest the hope of man.** The hope of the much-desired future life. "And" should be rendered "So."

20. **Thou prevailest for ever against him.** In his last struggle for life man is worsted. Even the hope of immortality is denied him, Job feels. **Thou changest his countenance.** A reference to the pallid countenance of the dead, which soon becomes horrible through corruption.

21. **His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not.** This was one of the sharp pangs of death. All that he had loved and lived for must go on without him.

22. **His flesh upon him hath pain.** Though in Sheol the man is conceived to consist as upon the earth of body and soul, the flesh, as in Isa. 66 : 24, suffers from the pains of decomposition. **His soul . . . mourneth.** For the bright life of the upper world. The ancients uniformly thought of the dead as longing in the gloomy underworld for the brightness of life.

And fill his belly with the east wind?
3. Should he reason with unprofitable talk,
Or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?
4. Yea, thou doest away with fear,
And [1] restrainest [2] devotion before God.
5. For [3] thine iniquity teacheth thy mouth,
And thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

---

[1] m. Heb. *diminishest.* [2] m. Or, *meditation.* [3] m. Or, *thy mouth teacheth thine iniquity.*

---

(1) *Eliphaz reproves and convicts Job*, 15: 1–16

2. **A wise man.** In 12: 3 and 13: 2 Job had claimed to be wise. Eliphaz refers to these claims and asks if this is the manner in which a wise man would speak. **Vain knowledge.** The margin, "knowledge of wind" or "windy knowledge" gives the literal meaning of the Hebrew. Job seemed to his friends to pour forth windy words. Bildad in 8: 2 had used the same figure of Job's reply to Eliphaz. **East wind.** Several of the ancient versions render "burning wind," the equivalent of the modern "sirocco." In Palestine this wind pours in from the arid and heated desert sometimes for weeks at a stretch. It sucks the moisture from everything, causing leaves to wither, parching the skin, and rendering life a burden. Such, says Eliphaz, is the effect of Job's words.

3. **Unprofitable talk.** This and the rest of the verse further explain Eliphaz's conception of Job's speech.

4. **Doest away with fear.** One of the commonest terms for worship in antiquity was "fear." Job had lost all fear or reverence for God. His utterances seemed to Eliphaz to do away with all religion. **Restrainest devotion.** The margin, "diminishest meditation" is more literal. The idea seems to be that Job destroys that quiet stillness before God which is the heart of religion.

5. **Thine iniquity teacheth thy mouth.** The Hebrew is ambiguous. If we read it as in the text, it means that Job's sinfulness has prompted his irreverent speech. If we read it as in the margin, "Thy mouth teacheth thine iniquity," it means that Job's utterances are proof to his friends of his guilt. Probably we should prefer the text to the margin, but in either case Eliphaz declares that Job has now proven himself a sinner.

6. Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I;
Yea, thine own lips testify against thee.
7. Art thou the first man that was born?
Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?
8. [1] Hast thou heard the secret counsel of God?
And dost thou [2] restrain wisdom to thyself?
9. What knowest thou, that we know not?
What understandest thou, which is not in us?
10. With us are both the grayheaded and the very aged men,

---

[1] m. Or, *Dost thou hearken in the council.* [2] Syr. Ar. *reveal.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *discover.*

---

6. **Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I.** The words remind us of words in the New Testament: "What further need have we of witnesses?" Mk. 14: 63. Eliphaz feels that nothing could so conclusively prove corruption as such utterances.

7. **Art thou the first man.** The pent up indignation of Eliphaz finds expression in a series of ironical questions. It was an axiom of the time that wisdom pertained to age. Eliphaz asks, "Art thou the first man that was born," that thou art able to speak with such surpassing wisdom? **Brought forth before the hills.** For the expression compare Ps. 90: 2, and Pr. 8: 25. In the latter passage (Pr. 8: 25–30) wisdom is personified as existing before the hills and as standing by God as an architect during creation.

8. **Hast thou heard the secret counsel.** We obtain the thought of the Hebrew by slightly altering the marginal reading, making it, "Didst thou hear the secret council?" Eliphaz asks sarcastically whether Job has been admitted to the special secrets of God. **Restrain wisdom to thyself.** This is usually taken to mean, "Didst thou draw wisdom to thyself?" This, however, makes a weak contrast to the first line. We should emend the text either with the Syriac or the Greek as cited above and read, "Didst thou reveal wisdom to thyself?" or "Didst thou discover wisdom for thyself?" Eliphaz ironically asks if a special revelation is the source of Job's wisdom, or does it spring from his own remarkable personality.

9. **What knowest thou that we know not?** The positive question is a negative assertion. Eliphaz does not believe that Job is a bit wiser than his friends.

10. **Grayheaded . . . aged . . . elder than thy father.** The

Much elder than thy father.
11. Are the consolations of God too small for thee,
[1] And the word *that dealeth* gently with thee?
12. Why doth thine heart carry thee away?
And why do thine eyes [2] wink?
13. That thou turnest thy spirit against God,
And lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth.
14. What is man, that he should be clean?
And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?
15. Behold, he putteth no trust in his holy ones;

---

[1] m. Or, *Or is there any secret thing with thee?*

[2] Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *tremble* or *roll*.

idea persists with Eliphaz that age means wisdom, although Job had denied this in 12 : 12.

11. **The consolations of God.** Probably a reference to the consolations contained in the former speech of Eliphaz. **Too small for thee.** A Hebrew idiom for something that is unsatisfying or insufficient; cf. Num. 16 : 9 and Isa. 7 : 13. **The word that dealeth gently with thee.** The text is far preferable to the margin. The reference is still to Eliphaz's former speech, in which he had endeavored to deal gently with Job.

12. **Thine heart.** We should say thy feelings. **Thine eyes wink.** We should read with the versions cited above "tremble," *i.e.* "roll." The reference is to the flashing or rolling of the eyes in anger or passionate feeling.

13. **Thy spirit against God.** The heart of religious unrest is the lack of resignation. Eliphaz could not appreciate the causes which for the moment made it impossible for Job to be resigned; Job's attitude accordingly seemed to him wilful rebellion. **Such words.** That is, bitter, rebellious words — the outpourings of a rebellious spirit.

14. **He which is born of woman.** Eliphaz cites the Oriental estimate of woman, which Job himself had mentioned in 14 : 1, as proof of the impossibility of human purity. The revelation of this impossibility to himself Eliphaz had told in his former speech, 4 : 12 ff.

15. **Holy ones.** The angels as in 5 : 1. **The heavens.** The heavens and stars were to the Hebrews a symbol of clearness, brightness, purity (cf. Ex. 24 : 10 and Job 25 : 5), but even these

Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.
16. How much less[1] one that is abominable and corrupt,
A man that drinketh iniquity like water!
17. I will shew thee, hear thou me;
And that which I have seen I will declare:
18. (Which wise men have told
[2] From their fathers, and have not hid it;
19. Unto whom alone the land was given,
And no stranger passed among them:)
20. The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,

---

[1] m. Or, *that which is.*

[2] Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *And their fathers have not hidden.*

---

are, Eliphaz declares, impure in God's sight. So far does the divine standard exceed the human.

16. **Abominable and corrupt.** The terms are used of man in an ethical sense in contrast with the angels. The word for "corrupt" occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament only in Ps. 14 : 3 and 53 : 3, where it has an ethical meaning. **A man.** Man in general, but with a hint at Job. **Drinketh iniquity like water.** That is, as naturally as he drinks water to quench his thirst.

(2) *The wise, on the wicked,* 15 : 17-35

17. **I will shew thee.** Having finished his reproof, Eliphaz again undertakes to instruct Job. **That which I have seen.** As before, he speaks from experience and observation.

18. **Which wise men have told.** What Eliphaz will say is also the wisdom of the ancients. His observation, he feels, has taught him the truth because it is in accordance with the experience of the past. **From their fathers, and have not hid it.** We should read with the versions cited above, "And their fathers have not hidden." The tradition, he declares, has come down in an unbroken chain from remote antiquity.

19. **No stranger passed among them.** To devastate the land by conquest and to corrupt the stream of orthodox tradition by the admixture of foreign currents.

20. **The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days.** This is the philosophy of life which has been handed down from the past. Eliphaz believes it true. The author of Ps. 73, like Job, had occasion to form a different view of the matter; see Ps. 73 : 4, 5, 7, 12. In the last clause of the verse the text is to be preferred to the margin.

[1] Even the number of years that are laid up for
the oppressor.
21. A sound of terrors is in his ears;
In prosperity the spoiler shall come upon him:
22. He believeth not that he shall return out of
darkness,
And he is waited for of the sword:
23. [2] He wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where
is it?
[3] He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready
at his hand:
24. [4] Distress and anguish [5] make him afraid;

---

[1] m. Or. *And years that are numbered are laid up &c.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *He is appointed for food of vultures.* [3] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *He knows that he is destined to calamity, and the day of darkness terrifies him.* [4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Distress and anguish overwhelm him.* [5] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. take the phrase with the preceding verse as above.

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21. **A sound of terrors is in his ears.** Even when he is prosperous he is tortured by anticipations of coming retribution. **The spoiler shall come upon him.** His gloomy anticipations are swiftly realized. It is a very different view from that of Ps. 73:5.

22. **He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness.** When the calamity comes he has no hope of restoration, for he knows he does not deserve it. **He is waited for of the sword.** We should probably read with the versions cited above, "laid up for the sword." The passage seems to mean that he is taken captive by the spoilers and reserved for slaughter.

23. **He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it?** We should read with the versions cited above, "He is appointed for food of vultures." The reading involves the change of but a single letter in the Hebrew, and continues much better the thought of v. 22. It is natural after one is given to the sword to say that he will be food for vultures. **He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.** We should read with the versions cited above: "He knows that he is destined to calamity." With these versions we should connect "the day of darkness" with the first verb in v. 24, making the sentence, "The day of darkness terrifies him."

24. **Distress and anguish make him afraid, they prevail against him.** We should read with the versions just quoted, "Distress

They prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle:
25. Because he hath stretched out his hand against God,
And [1] behaveth himself proudly against the Almighty;
26. He runneth upon him with [2] a *stiff* neck,
[3] With the thick bosses of his bucklers:
27. Because he hath covered his face with his fatness,

---

[1] m. Or, *biddeth defiance to.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *pride.* [3] m. Or, *Upon.*

---

and anguish overwhelm him." The four lines then become five and read:

"He is appointed for food of vultures,
He knows that he is destined to calamity,
The day of darkness terrifies him,
Distress and anguish overwhelm him
As a king ready for the onset."

As a king ready to the battle. The word rendered "battle" occurs nowhere else and is doubtful. It would, perhaps, be better to render it "onset." Some scholars think the clause unsuitable here, and regard it as a gloss to v. 26. If, however, we connect it directly with "distress and anguish," as is done above, it is a fitting conclusion to the thought. In his foreboding he pictures distress and anguish as a king ready for the onset, and is, in anticipation, already overwhelmed by them.

25. **Because he hath stretched out his hand against God.** This verse gives the reason for the mental forebodings previously described. **Behaveth himself proudly.** The margin renders "biddeth defiance to." It is expressed in Hebrew by a word which means "to act like a warrior." This word is further illustrated in the following verses.

26. **With a stiff neck.** We should read with the versions cited above, "with pride" or "insolence." **With the thick bosses.** "With" is better than "Upon" of the margin. The verse is a picture of how the man who "acts like a warrior" conducts himself in battle. Like such a man, the sinner makes his attack upon God.

27. **Covered his face with his fatness.** Fatness is used in the Old Testament as a synonym for a spirit that is rebellious and

And made collops of fat on his flanks;
28. [1] And he hath dwelt in [2] desolate cities,
In houses which no man [3] inhabited,
Which were ready to become heaps.
29. He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue,
Neither shall [4] their produce bend to the earth.
30. He shall not depart out of darkness;
The flame shall dry up his branches,
And by the breath [5] of his mouth [6] shall he go away.

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *And may he dwell.* [2] m. Heb. *cut off.* [3] m. Or, *would inhabit.* [4] m. Or, *their possessions be extended on the earth.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *cast a shadow upon the earth.* Gr. Sah. *his flower.* [5] Eth. *his fruit.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *shall fall.*

---

insensate to all the higher and finer sensibilities. See Deut. 32:15 and Ps. 73:7. **Collops of fat.** That is, thick folds of fat or a superabundance of it.

28. **And he hath dwelt in desolate cities.** As the text stands it refers to the past. The dwelling of the prosperous sinner could only be said to be desolate in a figurative way on account of his foreboding of evil. It is better to read with the versions cited above, "And may he dwell in desolate cities." This involves no change in the Hebrew letters, but in two vowel points only. The verse then becomes a pious wish of Eliphaz expressive of his conception of a fate befitting one who so insolently attacks God.

29. **Neither shall their produce bend to the earth.** The Hebrew word for "produce" is unusual and doubtful. Perhaps we should read with the versions cited above, "Neither shall he cast a shadow upon the earth." We should then have an antithetic parallelism: he shall not become rich, but on the contrary shall waste away. The casting of a shadow begins the comparison of the sinner to a tree.

30. **He shall not depart out of darkness.** This sentence interrupts the comparison of the sinner to a tree, which the previous verse had begun. As several commentators have perceived, it is a gloss brought in here from v. 22, and should be omitted. **The flame.** Figurative for the fierce heat of the sun. **And by the breath.** We should read "by the wind." "Breath" and "wind" are expressed in Hebrew by the same Hebrew word. **Of his**

31. Let him not trust [1] in vanity, deceiving himself:
For vanity shall be his recompence.
32. [2] It shall be [3] accomplished before his time,
And his branch shall not be green.
33. He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine,
And shall cast off his flower as the olive.
34. For the company of the godless shall be barren,
And fire shall consume the tents of bribery.
35. They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity,
And their belly [4] prepareth deceit.

---

[1] Gr. Sah. *that he shall continue.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. *His cutting.* [3] m. Or, *paid in full.* Syr. Ar. *shall wither.* [4] Gr. Syr. OLat. Eth. Ar. *containeth.*

---

mouth. We should read with the versions cited above either "his flower" or "his fruit." **Shall he go away.** We must read with the versions cited, "shall fall." The verse then becomes:

> "The flame shall dry up his branches
> And by the wind his flower shall fall."

31. **Let him not trust in vanity, deceiving himself.** Most recent interpreters omit this verse as an abstract gloss which interrupts the thought. If, however, we read with the two versions cited:

> "Let him not trust that he shall continue,
> For vanity shall be his recompense,"

we have a verse which admirably fits the context. **Vanity.** Here equivalent to "disaster."

32. **It shall be accomplished before his time.** We should read with the versions cited above, "His pruning shall be accomplished before its time," or "shall wither before its time." The figure of the tree is continued. The approaching calamities are metaphorically spoken of as a pruning out of season.

33. **He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine.** Under still other metaphors the figure of calamity as the premature falling of the unripe fruit of a vine or tree is continued in this verse. How disappointing is such failure!

34. **For the . . . godless shall be barren.** This sums up in plain words all that Eliphaz has been setting forth through this long figure.

35. **Prepareth deceit.** We should read with the versions

8. *Job's Second Reply to Eliphaz*, Chs. 16, 17

16. Then Job answered and said,
2. I have heard many such things:
[1] Miserable comforters are ye all.
3. Shall [2] vain words have an end?
Or what provoketh thee that thou answerest?
4. I also could speak as ye do;
If your soul were in my soul's stead,
I could join words together against you,
And shake mine head at you.

---

[1] m. Or, *Wearisome.*

[2] m. Heb. *words of wind.*

---

quoted above, "containeth deceit." Eliphaz concludes with this sweeping description of the wicked.

(1) *Job is weary of vain talk*, 16 : 1–5

2. **I have heard many such things as these.** Probably what Job means is that the friends say the same things over and over. In reality they all repeat the same thought, viz. that Job must have sinned or he would not suffer, and that the righteous enjoy outward prosperity. He had declared in 12 : 3 that everybody knew such things, but Eliphaz had said the same things again. It is hard when ill to hear an unjust platitude once; to have it repeated again and again is exasperating. **Miserable comforters.** The margin gives the literal meaning. Instead of comforting him the friends increased his suffering. The words refer, perhaps, to the question of Eliphaz, "Are the consolations of God too small for thee?" 15 : 11.

3. **Vain words.** Literally, as the margin has it, "words of wind." Job returns upon Eliphaz his own accusation of "windy knowledge," 15 : 2. **What provoketh thee?** Job seems quite unconscious that he has said anything to irritate his friends. This is true to human nature.

4. **I also could speak as ye do.** It is easy to moralize when the torture is inflicted upon another. Job perceives this and implies that the man with real insight and genuine sympathy would rise above such temptation. **Join words together.** Make artificial speeches. **Shake mine head.** A gesture of astonishment or scorn; cf. Ps. 22 : 7 and Isa. 37 : 22. Here it is, as Hitzig and

5. *But* I would strengthen you with my mouth,
And the solace of my lips [1] should assuage *your grief*.
6. Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged:
And though I forbear, [2] what am I eased?
7. But now he hath made me weary:
[3] Thou hast made desolate [4] all my company.

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. *I would not spare you.*
[2] m. Heb. *what departeth from me?*
[3] Gr. OLat. Sah. *He hath made me desolate.*
[4] Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *all my company.*

Davidson note, as much as to say: "Ah! I would not have thought that a man who seemed so pious was as great a sinner as his misfortunes show that he is."

5. **Should assuage your grief.** We should read with the versions cited above, "I would not spare you." Job does not say that he would assuage their grief. His mood is rather that in which he wishes for the moment that the tables were turned, that he might let his friends know by experience how one in his position feels to be thus addressed.

(2) *Job asserts his belief that God is permanently hostile to him,* 16:6–17

6. **Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged.** This verse is a transition between what precedes and what follows. Job has flung out his taunt to his friends, and now turns to himself. In his preceding speeches he has uttered with unexampled freedom all the wild thoughts which came into his mind, but his suffering is lessened neither in body nor mind. Naturally he wonders whether speech avails anything. **Though I forbear, what am I eased?** The thought is the same whether we adopt the reading of the text or the margin. Silence brings no more relief than speech.

7. **He.** That is, God. **Hath made me weary.** Has exhausted my patience. **Thou hast made me desolate.** We should read with the Greek and other versions, "He has made me desolate." **All my company.** These are strange words here. They are supposed to refer to Job's friends, but it is better with the versions cited above to omit them, and fill out the line by taking over the first verb from v. 8. The verse would then read:

> "He has wearied me out,
> Made me desolate, and seized me."

8. And [1] thou hast [2] laid fast hold on me, *which* is a witness *against me:*
And my leanness riseth up against me, it testifieth to my face.
9. He hath torn me in his wrath, and [3] persecuted me;
He hath gnashed upon me with his teeth:
Mine [4] adversary sharpeneth [5] his eyes upon me.
10. They have gaped upon me with their mouth;
They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully:
They gather themselves together against me.

---

[1] Gr. *he.* [2] m. Or, *shrivelled me up.* Gr. takes this with the preceding verse.
[3] m. Or, *hated me.* Gr. OLat. Sah. *overthrew me.* [4] Sym. Syr. Ar. *adversaries.*
[5] Sym. Syr. Ar. *their eyes.*

---

8. **Which is a witness against me.** As the italics show, the revisers have added some words. These are unnecessary. We should read the verse in connection with v. 7, thus:

> "He has wearied me out,
> Made me desolate, seized me;
> For a witness is it that he stands against me;
> My leanness answers to my face."

Testifieth to my face. Of what God is doing and what his attitude toward me is.

9. **Torn me in his wrath.** The verse pictures another step in the manifestation of God's hostility. **Persecuted me.** Better than either the text or the margin is the reading of the versions given above, "he hath cast me down." **He hath gnashed upon me with his teeth.** The whole description is that of a beast of prey pursuing his victim. He wearies him in the chase, seizes him, tears him, throws him down, and gnashes his teeth at him. **Mine adversary.** We should read with the versions cited, "adversaries" and "their eyes." The line begins a description which is continued in the next verse. As other interpreters have noticed, v. 11 should come before this clause.

10. **They have gaped upon me.** The whole verse continues the description of adversaries begun in v. 9. Probably Job has his friends in mind, and this verse reveals how their consolations have impressed him.

11. God delivereth me to the ungodly,
And casteth me into the hands of the wicked.
12. I was at ease, and he brake me asunder;
Yea, he hath taken me by [1] the neck, and dashed
me to pieces:
He hath also set me up for his mark.
13. His [2] archers compass me round about,
He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare;
He poureth out my gall upon the ground.
14. He breaketh me with breach upon breach;

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *the hair.*

[2] m. Or, *arrows*, or, *mighty ones.*

---

11. **God delivereth me to the ungodly.** As noted above, this verse should come before 9c. Up to that point God has been portrayed as a lion pursuing his prey. As the lion casts something to the jackals, so God, having worried Job, has cast him to lesser tormentors. **The wicked.** The strength of the language makes one think of men who are actually sinners, but Job's actual experiences and the connection in which the phrase stands make one think it a reference to his friends. In his excited state he might apply to them such language. The friends thus become the jackals of the figure used above.

12. **He brake me asunder.** The verse returns to speak of God's own treatment of Job. Other figures are now employed to describe how the divine wrath was manifested. **He hath also set me up for his mark.** Shooting at a target was in ancient time a princely sport. An inscription found in front of the Sphinx in Egypt names as one of the accomplishments of Thothmes IV, who ruled from 1420 to 1411 B.C., "shooting at a target with copper bolts." Job represents God as similarly setting him up as his target.

13. **His archers compass me.** We should read as in the margin, "His arrows." The figure of the prince practising at a target is continued. About the target the arrows fly swiftly. **He cleaveth my reins asunder.** Now an arrow pierces the victim's body. "Reins," as often in Hebrew, is used for the vital parts. **He poureth out my gall.** An arrow pierces the gall bladder, and through the wound the gall exudes. The words look in two directions. They carry on the figure of the archer, and figuratively interpreted they eloquently set forth the bitterness of Job's suffering.

14. **He breaketh me with breach upon breach.** The figure is now changed. Job is a fortress which God is storming. **Like a**

He runneth upon me like a [1] giant.
15. I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin,
And have [2] laid my horn in the dust.
16. My face is [3] foul with weeping,
And on my eyelids is the shadow of death;
17. Although there is no violence in mine hands,
And my prayer is pure.
18. O earth, cover not thou my blood,

---

[1] m. Or, *mighty man.* [2] m. Or, *defiled.* [3] m. Or, *red.*

---

giant. Neither the text nor the margin gives quite the shade of thought. The word simply means "warrior." True there is associated with it the idea of success or heroism in war, but it means here the kind of warrior who successfully breaks his way into a fortress — a man like Richard Cœur de Lion.

15. **Sackcloth.** A coarse dark cloth made from the hair of goats and camels. It was worn on the loins next the skin in mourning. See 2 Kgs. 6 : 30. In primitive times it was probably the only garment the Semites wore, so in times of mourning or humiliation it was resumed. **Laid my horn in the dust.** Literally "thrust my horn in the dust." The horn was a symbol of strength. To exalt one's horn was to strengthen or prosper him (1 Sam. 2 : 1); for one to lift up his horn was to be arrogant (Ps. 75 : 3, 4); to break or cut off one's horn was to weaken him (Jer. 48 : 25; Lam. 2 : 3). Accordingly, to thrust one's horn in the dust was utterly to humble one's self.

16. **My face is foul with weeping.** Not even the marginal "red" quite gives the force of the word. "Inflamed is my face" is the meaning of the Hebrew. **Shadow of death.** He feels that the darkness of death is settling down over his vision.

17. **Although there is no violence in mine hands.** Three of the four words by which this clause is expressed in the Hebrew are identical with words in the first clause of Isa. 53 : 9. Perhaps there was a conscious adoption of the words of the great Servant of Jehovah. **My prayer is pure.** Job repels the charge of irreverence which Eliphaz had made in 15 : 4. The whole verse is a repudiation of his insinuations of sinfulness in 15 : 5 and 35.

(3) *Faith in God and righteousness struggles through his storm of feeling*, 16 : 18–17 : 9

18. **O earth, cover not thou my blood.** The injustice of his terrible fate, that he, an innocent man, should be thus done to

And let my cry [1] have no *resting* place.
19. Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven,
And he that voucheth for me is on high.
20. [2] My friends scorn me:

---

[1] m. Or, *have no more place.*

[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *May my prayer come before God, and my eyes pour out tears before him.*

---

death, breaks over Job anew, and he utters a passionate appeal that his blood be not covered. There was a widespread feeling in antiquity, which the Hebrews shared, that blood spilled on the ground cried for vengeance (cf. Gen. 4: 10; Heb. 11: 4; 12: 24). Its cry might be stifled by covering it (Gen. 37: 26), so Ezekiel (24: 7, 8) declared that certain blood should be poured on the rock where its cry could not be suppressed by being absorbed. It is true the earth might disclose the blood thus absorbed (Isa. 26: 21), but the absorption was nevertheless an interruption of its cry. That this was the thought in Job's mind is shown by the next clause. **Let my cry have no resting place.** It would be a little consolation if the cry against so cruelly unjust a fate could go up unceasingly. In reality Job's blood was not actually shed, and the whole passage is figurative, but it nevertheless expresses his passionate feeling.

19. **My witness is in heaven.** One of the finest threads which the poet has woven into this great poem is the thought that after all God is just. However much Job may in his rebellion against his fate charge God with ill-treating him, the poet represents him as coming back again and again to unshakable confidence in the moral integrity and ultimate justice of God. One instance of it is found in 13: 16, and another instance occurs here. Job in the hopelessness of his unjust fate demands that the cry for justice shall never be silenced or interrupted, when suddenly his unshakable conviction in the moral character of God — a conviction which no tortures could eradicate from him — surges up again, and he declares that his Witness is in heaven, and that there is on high One to vouch for him. He no longer hopes for life; he has not now faith that God will ever call him up from Sheol; but, when his present mood of anger is gone by, God will some day acknowledge that Job was innocent and pure, and Job's good name will be vindicated.

20. **My friends scorn me.** Literally, "My scorners are my friends." The versions quoted above had a different reading, but one which is out of harmony with the context. Several emendations have been proposed, but the passage is touchingly

But mine eye poureth out tears unto God;
21. [1] That he would maintain the right of a man with God,
And of a son of man with his neighbour!
22. For when a few years are come,
I shall go the way whence I shall not return.
17. [2] My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct,

---

[1] m. Or, *That one might plead for a man with God, as a son of man* pleadeth *for his neighbour.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *I am ruined, tortured in spirit; I long for the grave and do not find it.*

---

beautiful as it stands. Buffeted to death by God and scorned by his friends, Job lifts his tear-stained face to the Almighty. Crushed by God himself, the heart still flees to God as the one source of consolation and justice.

21. **That he would maintain the right of a man with God.** The text is to be preferred to the margin. The thought is that God should become with himself Job's advocate. In 9:33 he had asked for a daysman; he now asks that God himself shall be the Daysman. However illogical such a thought may seem, it has great religious depth, and has in one form or another found expression in many religions. The Anselmic doctrine of the Atonement, that God's love pleads with his justice, and the belief that God the Son pleads with God the Father are different forms of it. Job, of course, has no such thought as either of these; he is thinking rather of God's tenderer and fairer mood pleading with his fierce and angry one. The thought that underlies all of these is found in Islam also and was beautifully expressed by Mohammed, "There is no refuge from God except God" (*Coran*, Sura 9:119).

22. **Few years.** In view of the conviction just expressed that death was near (v. 17), "few years" seems strange and out of place. We should probably with two or three interpreters make two slight changes in the Hebrew and read:

> "For the mourning women will come
> And I shall go whence I shall not return."

It is a picturesque and poetical way of speaking of his death. The vindication which he expects is to come after death and to affect his reputation only. He has no hope that he will be recalled from Sheol to be rewarded by happiness.

1. **My spirit is consumed**, etc. The verse continues the

The grave is *ready* for me.
2. [1] Surely there are [2] mockers with me,
And mine eye abideth [3] in their provocation.
3. Give now a pledge, be surety for me with thyself;
Who is there that will strike hands with me?
4. For thou hast hid their heart from understanding:

---

[1] Gr. Sah. *I have cried out.* [2] m. Heb. *mockery.* Gr. Sah. *exhausted.* Vulg. *I have not sinned.* [3] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *in bitterness.*

---

thought of 16:22. He had said that the mourning women would soon come and he would go to that bourn from which no traveller returns. He now declares that he is ready to go; his tribulations have broken his spirit. **The grave is ready for me.** The Hebrew is difficult, the versions differ, and scholars have proposed many emendations. By the change of one letter of the Hebrew we can translate, "The grave is mine." This change we should probably make.

2. **Surely there are mockers with me.** The verse is supposed by many to refer to Job's friends, but all recognize that it is very obscure and difficult. As Peake has said, the poet, had he intended this reference, would probably have expressed it more plainly. The versions as cited above differ widely and one cannot be certain about the meaning. If, however, we slightly emend the text in both halves of the verse on the basis of the Vulgate, Syriac and Arabic versions, it would read:

"Although there is no sin with me,
Yet my eye abides in bitterness."

The verse thus rendered gives an additional reason for the conditions described in v. 1.

3. **Be surety for me with thyself.** In 16:21 Job had appealed from God to God, *i.e.* from God's present mood to that better mood which he felt sure would come to the Almighty when he would regret the harshness of his present treatment of Job and would vindicate his memory. Job now asks of God that he will deposit with himself a pledge to thus vindicate him. **Who . . . will strike hands with me?** This is the action by which the pledge is sealed. In Babylonian "he struck his hand" means to conclude a bargain. In reality it is God who will, Job hopes, make the agreement. His thought reminds one of Heb. 6:13: "For . . . God. . . since he could swear by no greater, sware by himself."

4. **Thou hast hid their heart from understanding.** That is, the heart of all others but thyself. Perhaps there is a special ref-

Therefore shalt thou not exalt *them*.
5. He that denounceth his friends for a [1] prey,
Even the eyes of his children shall fail.
6. [2] He hath made me also a byword of the people;
And I am become [3] an open abhorring.
7. Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow,
And all my members are as a shadow.
8. Upright men shall be astonied at this,
And the innocent shall stir up himself against the godless.

---

[1] m. Heb. *portion*. [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Thou hast*. [3] m. Or, *one in whose face they spit*.

---

erence to his friends. Job believes that he can be understood only by God.

5. **He that denounceth his friends for a prey.** The verse is difficult, and many interpretations have been proposed for it. Probably we ought with Peake to change the pointing of the verb rendered "prey" and translate:

"One invites friends to partake
While the eyes of his children fail."

We should then take the verse to be the quotation of a proverb illustrating the lack of understanding spoken of in v. 4. It would mean "men are so foolish that they keep open house while their own children starve; how can they be expected, then, to look beneath appearances and do justice to one who is wronged?"

6. **He hath made me a byword.** We should read with the versions cited, "Thou hast made me a byword." Job turns his address to God, declaring that because of all that God has brought upon him, the story of his woes will be told everywhere and he will be regarded as an object of scorn because men will believe that his sufferings prove him to have been wicked. Underlying this address to God there is a further reflection upon the intelligence of every one but God. Thus the thought is closely connected with v. 4.

7. **Mine eye has become dim.** Through constant weeping. **All my members are as a shadow.** The word rendered "members" may be rendered "features." In either case the reference is to the wasting of his form through illness.

8. **Upright men shall be astonied at this.** Astonished that a man whom they had thought righteous should so suffer. **Stir up himself against the godless.** Those who regard themselves as

9. Yet shall the righteous hold on his way,
And he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.
10. But return ye, all of you, and come now:
[1] And I shall not find a wise man among you.
11. My days are past, [2] my purposes [3] are broken off,
Even the [4] thoughts of my heart.

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[1] m. Or, *For I find not.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *in rottenness.* OLat. *in calamities.* [3] Gr. Sah. OLat. Eth. connect this verb with the last clause. [4] m. Heb. *possessions.*

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innocent will become zealous in their exhortations to the godless, using Job's misfortunes as a text to persuade them to repent.

9. **Yet shall the righteous hold on his way.** As we have noted above, Job has expressed the conviction that he will ultimately be vindicated by God (16:19 ff.). He here expresses the belief that something of his own hard-earned faith in the validity of righteousness will be shared by other pure souls. In spite of God's seeming injustice and varying moods, they will have faith enough in his real goodness to go quietly on their way increasing in strength. Job thus attributes to others his own heroic resolution. Duhm and Peake have thought the verses an interpolation here, but, understood as suggested, that is not necessary. Davidson's remark is justified, "The passage is perhaps the most surprising and lofty in the book."

(4) *Outwardly Job expects Sheol only*, 17:10–16

10. **But return ye.** An address to his friends. He does not mean to imply that they are going away: the words are rather an invitation to them to repeat their arguments. **Not find a wise man among you.** His friends were not wise because their arguments, though in accord with tradition, did not ring true to life.

11. **My purposes are broken off.** The Hebrew of the line is difficult, and probably the text is corrupt. We should read with the versions cited above, "in rottenness" instead of "my purposes," and connect the verb with the last half of the verse. **Even the thoughts of my heart.** Instead of "thoughts" we should read as in the margin "possessions." The whole verse with the emended text would read:

"My days are passed in rottenness;
My cherished possessions are torn away."

The verse is a picture of Job's desolate condition.

12. [1] They change the night into day:
The light, *say they*, is near [2] unto the darkness.
13. [3] If I look for [4] Sheol as mine house;
If I have spread my couch in the darkness;
14. If I have said to [5] corruption, Thou art my father;
To the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my sister;
15. Where then is my hope?
And as for [6] my hope, who shall see it?

---

[1] Gr. *I change.* [2] m. Or, *because of darkness.* [3] m. Or, *If I hope, Sheol is mine house; I have spread . . . I have said . . . and where is now my hope?* [4] m. Or, *the grave.* [5] m. Or, *the pit.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *my goods.*

---

12. **They change.** We should read with the Greek, "I change," as it suits the context far better. **The light, say they, is near unto darkness.** This line is very difficult as it stands, and the marginal reading does not improve it. Two changes in the Hebrew have been suggested by Duhm and Beer, which should be adopted with slight modification. The line then reads, "Light before me is darkness." The whole verse would then read:

"I change the night into day;
Morning-light before me is darkness."

It is a continuation of the description of his present suffering condition which the preceding verse began.

13. **If I look,** etc. We should read with the margin, "If I hope."

14. **My father, . . . my mother, and my sister.** By these very vivid metaphors Job expresses the close kinship of the decaying body to the grave and its repulsive assistants.

15. **Where then is my hope?** The meaning of vs. 13–15 is this: Job had said that death was near, and he would soon be in Sheol. He asks, "If I hope for Sheol as my house, if I have spread my couch in the darkness (*i.e.* of Sheol), if I have said to the pit thou art my father and to the worm, my mother and my sister, where then is my hope of prosperity that you are prating about, if I repent?" **And as for my hope.** We should read with the versions cited above, "Where then are my goods?" *i.e.* my earthly goods or prosperity of which you speak.

16. [1] It shall go down to the bars of [2] Sheol,
[3] When once there is rest in the dust.

9. *Bildad's Second Speech*, Ch. 18

18. Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2. How long [4] will ye lay snares for words?
Consider, and [5] afterwards we will speak.
3. Wherefore are we counted as beasts,
And are become unclean in [6] your sight?
4. Thou that tearest thyself in thine anger,
Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Shall they go down to Sheol with me?* [2] m. Or, *the grave.* [3] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *Or shall we descend to the dust together?* [4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *wilt thou make an end of words?* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *afterwards.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *thine eyes.*

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16. **Go down to the bars of Sheol.** The text is corrupt and should be corrected with the versions cited above so as to read:

> "Shall they go down to Sheol with me?
> Or together shall we descend to the dust?"

The reference is to Job's "goods" referred to in v. 15, and gives further sarcastic point to the question there asked.

(1) *Why is Job so contemptuous of his friends?* 18: 1–4

2. **Will ye lay snares.** The text is undoubtedly corrupt. Job is addressed in the plural, and "snares of words" makes no sense here. The Hebrew word for "snares," too, occurs nowhere else. We should emend the text on the basis of the versions quoted above so as to read:

> "How long wilt thou make an end of words?
> Consider, and we will speak."

Bildad wishes to secure Job's silence and attention.

3. **Unclean.** The Hebrew word means "stupid," which makes better sense here. **Your sight.** We should emend with the versions to "thy sight."

4. **Thou that tearest thyself in thine anger.** Job had in 16:9 accused God of tearing him; Bildad replies that it is Job who in his impotent rage is tearing himself. **Shall the earth be for-**

Or shall the rock be removed out of its place?
5. Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out,
And the [1] spark of his fire shall not shine.
6. The light shall be dark in his tent,
And his lamp [2] above him shall be put out.
7. The steps of his strength shall be straitened,
And his own counsel shall [3] cast him down.
8. For [4] he is cast into a net by his own feet,
And he [5] walketh upon the toils.

---

[1] m. Or, *flame*. [2] m. Or, *beside*. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *cause him to stumble*.
[4] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *his foot is cast into a net*. [5] Gr. OLat. *rolls*.

---

saken for thee . . . the rock removed out of its place? These are figurative expressions. Bildad means, "Shall the fixed moral order of the world be turned upside down that thou mayest escape the deserved imputation of wickedness?" He hits upon one of the real faults of Job as a sufferer — a fault common to many sufferers — he is thoroughly self-centred.

(2) *The terrible fate of the wicked*, 18:5–21

5. **The light of the wicked shall be put out.** Bildad now turns to repeat again the tale of the dire punishments of the wicked on which the friends have dwelt before. The figure with which he begins is a reference to the emphasis which Job had put upon the darkness of Sheol in the last part of his preceding speech, see 17:12, 13.

6. **His lamp above him.** Which hangs from the roof of the tent. Cf. 29:3.

7. **The steps of his strength shall be straitened.** This is another figure of the misfortunes of the wicked. For one to make wide his steps is an oriental figure for prosperity (see Ps. 4:1). The figure is derived from the wide free stride of the successful and confident man. The unsuccessful man loses self-confidence, becomes timorous, and takes shorter, cautious steps (see Pr. 4:12). **Shall cast him down.** It is better by transposing two Hebrew letters to read with the versions cited above "shall cause him to stumble," thus continuing the figure. Involved in misfortune, the very means he takes to extricate himself involve him more deeply.

8. **He is cast into a net by his own feet.** We should read with the versions quoted above, "his own foot is cast into [*i.e.* thrust into] a net." **He walketh upon the toils.** The reading of the

9. A gin shall take *him* by [1] the heel,
And a snare shall lay hold on him.
10. A noose is hid for him in the ground,
And a trap for him in the way.
11. Terrors shall make him afraid on every side,
And shall chase him at his heels.
12. His strength shall be hungerbitten,
And calamity shall be ready [2] for his halting.
13. It shall devour the [3] members of his body,

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[1] Syr. Vulg. *his heel.* [2] m. Or, *at his side.* [3] m. Heb. *bars of his skin.*

two versions cited is better, "he rolls upon the toils." This vividly carries on the preceding figure. As he walks he puts his foot into a net and goes sprawling on the toils.

9. **By the heel.** The two versions cited above read "his heel," which is better. The verse repeats in other words the thought of v. 8.

10. **A noose is hid for him in the ground.** After having been caught once he expects traps everywhere. It is this which robs him of courage.

11. **Terrors shall make him afraid on every side.** This aptly describes a man robbed of his nerve. **Chase him at his heels.** He is not sure when he has passed a point that it has no terrors; he is beset behind and before.

12. **His strength shall be hungerbitten.** This is an unusual expression. If the text says this, the meaning is that famine overtakes him. As the text stands, however, the second line does not form a good parallelism. Many interpreters accordingly take the word rendered "strength" from a different Hebrew root, which has the same letters, but which means "sorrow" or " isaster" and render, "His disaster is hungry," *i.e.* hungry for him, its prey. This gives a better parallel to the second half of the line. **For his halting.** Interpreters are divided whether to read "halting" as in the text or "side" as in the margin. The Hebrew is open to either meaning and either makes good sense.

13. **Shall devour the members of his body.** The margin tells us that the Hebrew reads "bars of his skin." This is a peculiar phrase upon which commentators have wasted a vast amount of ingenuity. It seems impossible to give it a satisfactory meaning which will altogether fit the context. Several scholars have noted that by the insertion of one Hebrew letter we should obtain the meaning, "By sickness his skin shall be devoured." This

Yea, the firstborn of death shall devour his members.
14. [1]He shall be rooted out of his tent wherein he trusteth;
And [2] he shall be brought to the king of terrors.
15. [3] There shall dwell in his tent [4] that which is none of his:
Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *His healing shall be rooted out of his tent.* [2] Heb. *it shall* (or *thou shalt) bring him.* [3] m. Or, *It shall dwell in his tent, that it be no more his,* or, *because it is none of his.* [4] 1 Heb. MS. Theod. Eth. *in his night.*

---

emendation should be adopted. **The firstborn of death.** This phrase has been a great puzzle. Some have thought of it as elephantiasis, the disease from which Job was suffering, others as the worms which devour the body. If we interpret the first line as above, it becomes simply the sickness there referred to.

14. **He shall be rooted out of his tent wherein he trusted.** The Hebrew as it stands is "his tent, his trust" — a very unusual expression. We should emend the text with the versions cited so as to read, "His healing shall be rooted out of his tent." The verse continues the thought of the preceding verse. **He shall be brought.** We should read with the margin, "It shall bring him," *i.e.* the sickness shall bring him. The two verses together, then, are read:

"By sickness his skin shall be devoured,
Death's firstborn shall eat his members;
His healing shall be rooted out of his tent,
And it shall bring him to the king of terrors."

15. **There shall dwell in his tent that which is none of his.** How difficult and unusual the Hebrew is, is indicated by the alternatives given in the margin. That the present text had rivals in ancient times is shown by the MS. and versional variant cited above. "In his night" cannot have been the true substitute for "that which is none of his," since it gives no meaning. Some commentators have suggested that Lilith, the name of a night demon (cf. Isa. 34:14), originally stood in the text here. The line would then read, "Lilith shall dwell in his tent." Duhm suggests "Belial" instead of "Lilith." This would require fewer changes in the Hebrew, but does not seem to me so probable as "Lilith." The verse would then read:

"Lilith shall dwell in his tent,
Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation."

Brimstone. Perhaps an allusion to the destruction of the cities of the plain, Gen. 19:24.

16. His roots shall be dried up beneath,
And above shall his branch [1] be cut off.
17. His remembrance shall perish from the earth,
And he shall have no name in the street.
18. He shall be driven from light into darkness,
And chased out of the world.
19. He shall have neither son nor son's son among his people,
Nor any remaining where he sojourned.
20. [2] They that come after shall be astonied [3] at his day,

---

[1] m. Or, *wither.* Theod. Eth. *fall.*

[2] m. Or, *They that dwell in the west are . . . as they that dwell in the east are &c.*

[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *at him.*

16. **His roots shall be dried up.** The comparison is now changed from a man who dies of a terrible disease and whose habitation becomes desolate to that of a dying tree. Cf. Amos 2:9.

17. **His remembrance shall perish from the earth.** This was always regarded among the Hebrews as a great calamity, see Deut. 9:14; 1 Sam. 24:21; 2 Sam. 14:7. Instead of "earth" we should here translate "land." "Earth" makes the statement too sweeping, and leaves nothing for the last half of the verse to say. **In the street.** The Hebrew is literally "on the face of outside." Davidson and Peake take it to refer to the more sparsely settled districts; it seems rather to refer to regions outside the sinner's own land.

18. **He shall be driven from,** etc. The verbs in the Hebrew are in the plural, "They shall chase him," etc. Duhm would make the verbs singular and understand "God" as the subject. The thought is much the same in any case.

19. **Among his people.** That is, among his kinsmen there shall be no refugee or survivor from his family. **Remaining where he sojourned.** It is better to translate, "No one escaped where he sojourned," taking the last clause to refer, not to his own dwelling, but to the dwellings of his relations whom he sometimes visited. The two halves of the verse are thus synonymous.

20. **They that come after.** It has been thought by some interpreters that this contradicts v. 17, which declared that his remembrance should perish from the earth. This is the reason why the margin renders, "They that dwell in the west . . .

As they that went before [1] were affrighted.
21. Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous,
And this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

10. *Job's Reply to Bildad's Second Speech*, Ch. 19

19. Then Job answered and said,
2. How long will ye vex my soul,
And break me in pieces with words?
3. These ten times have ye reproached me:
Ye are not ashamed that ye [2] deal hardly with me.

---

[1] m. Heb. *laid hold on horror.*

[2] Gr. OLat. Sah. *fall upon me.*

---

they that dwell in the east." Although the Hebrew words used do not have this meaning elsewhere, several recent interpreters favor this translation. The difficulty is, however, based on a misunderstanding of the Hebrew point of view expressed in v. 17. "Name" and "remembrance" are often in the Old Testament synonyms for posterity (see Deut. 9 : 14; 1 Sam. 24 : 21; 1 Sam. 14 : 7; and Ps. 72 : 17). Bildad was not saying that no one would hear the story of the wicked man, but that he would leave no posterity. We may, therefore, well keep the rendering given in the text. **At his day.** We should read with the versions cited, "at him." **They that went before.** How could his predecessors be frightened at him? Perhaps, as has been suggested by several scholars, because he came down to Sheol in such an emaciated condition, and was so horrible to look upon. For a kindred thought cf. Isa. 14 : 9 ff.

21. **Such are the dwellings of the unrighteous.** The verse simply clinches in a summary the point of the whole lurid description.

(1) *He remonstrates against persistently unkind criticism*, 19 : 1–6

2. **Break me in pieces.** A very vivid metaphor. It expresses the effect upon Job's nerves of the reiterated accusations of his friends.

3. **Ten times.** Used as in Gen. 31 : 41 for "several times." Seven and eight are similarly used in Micah 5 : 5. **Deal hardly with me.** We should read with the versions cited, "fall upon me." It vividly describes the attacks of the friends.

4. And be it indeed that I have erred,
Mine error remaineth with myself.
5. [1] If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me,
And plead against me [2] my reproach:
6. Know now that God hath [3] subverted me *in my cause*,
And hath compassed me with his net.
7. Behold, I [4] cry out of wrong, but I am not heard:
I cry for help, but there is no judgement.

---

[1] m. Or, *Will ye indeed . . . reproach?* [2] Gr. Sah. *with reproach.* [3] m. Or, *overthrown me.* [4] m. Or, *cry out, Violence!*

---

4. **Be it indeed that I have erred.** Job does not admit that he has. He still feels confident that he has not. He makes the supposition here for the sake of argument. **Mine error remaineth with myself.** The meaning of this phrase is ambiguous. It might mean, My sin is my own concern and is no business of yours, or, My sin does not injure you, it hurts no one but myself, or, I only know my sin, while you can simply guess at it. Probably, as Peake has noted, the second meaning is the one intended, since Job had said to God in 7 : 20, "If I have sinned, what do I unto thee, O thou Watcher of men?" showing that the thought that his sin could not injure another was a familiar one to him.

5. **If indeed ye will magnify yourselves.** The margin reads this as a question, which would be simply a difference of rhetorical form. In either case the verse begins a condition which is completed in v. 6. **Plead against me my reproach.** Might be translated, "prove against me my reproach." In that case it would mean, "prove to your own satisfaction my reproach." Some interpreters emend "my reproach" to "with reproach" on the basis of the versions quoted above, but the text is better as it stands.

6. **Know now that God hath subverted me.** Has deprived me of justice. He means to declare that his misfortunes have not been brought upon him by his sins, but by God's injustice to him. **Compassed me with his net.** This is a reference to the statement of Bildad in 18 : 8, that the wicked man is cast into a net by his own feet. Job declares that God has cast *him* into this net.

(2) *Job vainly cries for help*, 19 : 7–12.

7. **Cry out of wrong.** It is better to read with the margin, "I cry out, Violence!" **I am not heard.** Like many another he feels that he prays in vain. Thus the author of Lamentations (3 : 8) says, "When I cry and call for help, he shutteth out my prayer."

8. He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass,
And hath set darkness in my paths.
9. He hath stripped me of my glory,
And taken the crown from my head.
10. He hath broken me down on every side, and I am gone:
And mine hope hath he plucked up like a tree.
11. He hath also kindled his wrath against me,
And he counteth me unto him [1] as *one of* his adversaries.
12. His troops come on together, and cast up their way
against me,

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *as an enemy.*

---

8. **He hath fenced up my way.** It is a very forceful figure, and one that Job had used before (3:23; 13:27; 14:5). It is also employed in Hosea 2:6 and Lam. 3:7, 9. Some of the passages which use it employ the term "hedge," some, the term "wall." The high, thorny, impassable cactus hedges of some parts of Palestine, or the gigantic stone walls of other portions, effectually bar one's path. Job feels that he has been walking in a path thus bordered, and has suddenly come to a point where the high impassable fence extends also directly across the way. **Hath set darkness in my paths.** The metaphor is changed. Now it is not a fence, but thick darkness, which prevents progress.

9. **Stripped me of my glory.** A reference to the loss of his possessions. These in the eyes of the multitude constitute glory. **The crown from my head.** His reputation for righteousness; this in 29:14 is called his crown. The possessions and the reputation are closely connected, for it was the loss of possessions which took away his reputation for righteousness by convincing men that he was a sinner.

10. **Hath broken me down.** The Hebrew verb is one employed to describe the pulling down of structures, such as altars, walls, and buildings. Job represents God as destroying him like an old building. **Mine hope hath he plucked up.** An antithesis in the parallelism is produced by the way the contrasting figures are brought together.

11. **Kindled his wrath.** The metaphor changes once more. As in 10:17, the figure is borrowed from warfare. **One of his adversaries.** It is better with the versions cited to read simply, "as his enemy."

12. **Cast up their way.** An embankment or rampart from

And encamp round about my tent.
13. [1] He hath put my brethren far from me,
And mine acquaintance are wholly estranged from me.
14. My kinsfolk have failed,
And my familiar friends have forgotten me.
15. They that [2] dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger:
I am an alien in their sight.
16. I call unto my servant, and he giveth me no answer,

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[1] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. Aq. Sym. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *My brethren are removed far from me.*
[2] m. Or, *sojourn.*

---

which to attack a fortress. **My tent.** The expression seems incongruous after the strong military figure which has preceded, and the word is omitted by the Gr. Sah. and Eth. We have no clue, however, as to what to put in its place.

(3) *He is forsaken by all*, 19: 13–19

13. **He hath put my brethren far from me.** We should read with the authorities cited above, "My brethren are removed far from me." In this and the following verses Job dwells upon his lonely condition. **Wholly estranged from me.** By combining the Hebrew letters differently some scholars would obtain the meaning, "My acquaintance are fierce against me." This is possible, but does not fit the context so well.

14. **My kinsfolk have failed.** The lines of the verse are too short and the first line of v. 15 too long. We should probably, as several scholars have seen, divide thus, slightly modifying one Hebrew word:

"My kinsfolk have ceased to know me,
They that dwell in my house have forgotten me."

15. **They that dwell in mine house.** This, as already noted, is a part of the last sentence of the preceding verse. **My maids.** The verse reads, when reduced to its proper proportions by attaching a part to v. 14:

"My maids count me for a stranger,
I am an alien in their sight."

16. **He giveth me no answer.** Oriental servants ordinarily are

Though I intreat him with my mouth.
17. My breath is strange to my wife,
And [1] my supplication to the children [2] of my *mother's* womb.
18. Even young children despise me;

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[1] m. Or, *I make supplication*, or, *I am loathsome.* [2] m. Or, *of my body.* Sym. *my children.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *the children of my concubines.*

---

most obsequious to their masters (see Ps. 123: 2); when this is remembered, the low estate to which Job had fallen is obvious. **Though I intreat him.** We might better translate, "With my mouth I must entreat him."

17. **My breath is strange to my wife.** Most scholars take the word "strange" to mean "offensive," though some derive the Hebrew word from a root which means "loathsome" and render, "My breath is loathsome to my wife." It is possible, however, that "strange" is the word that belongs here, and that Job meant to say that his wife avoided him — using this figure to express the thought that she did not come near him. **And my supplication.** We should read with the margin, "I make supplication." **Children of my mother's womb.** The word "mother," as the italics show, is supplied by the revisers. The Hebrew word rendered "womb" has really the signification "belly," and though sometimes used for womb, is also used in a similar connection for the loins of a man (see Micah 6: 7 and Ps. 132: 11). The Hebrew is "I supplicate the children of my body." Symmachus supports this by translating simply "my children." The objection to reading this is that his children according to the prologue have all been killed. Does the poet make Job forget it for a moment? Has the poet, who did not write the prologue, forgotten it? Or are we to understand, as the three versions quoted above did, that he referred to children by concubines? The prologue and epilogue give the impression that Job was a monogamist. Many interpreters accordingly feel compelled to adopt the reading of the revisers and supply the word "mother," thus making him address his entreaty to his brothers. "Children," following the word "wife," would, however, more naturally be his own. We must remember, too, that in the ancient Orient almost no man of the wealth and dignity of Job failed to have children by slave-girls or concubines. There is no reason, therefore, why the poet should have felt any hesitation here in making Job refer to children of his own.

18. **Young children despise me.** Once young men regarded

If I arise, they speak against me.
19. All [1] my inward friends abhor me:
And they whom I loved are turned against me.
20. [2] My [3] bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh,
And I am escaped with the [4] skin of my teeth.
21. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends;

---

[1] m. Heb. *the men of my council.* Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *those who see me.* [2] Gr. Sah. *My flesh rots in my skin.* [3] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. put *bones* in the last half of the verse. [4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. omit *skin.*

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him with awe (cf. 29 : 8), but now even children laugh at him as they see him try to get up and hobble about; cf. 30 : 1 and 8–10.

19. **All my inward friends.** The Hebrew, as the margin shows, means "men of my council," *i.e.* his intimate associates. It is a strong, fine expression. The versions quoted above lost the fine edge of the phrase.

(4) *He appeals to his friends for pity;* 19 : 20–22

20. **My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh.** A very curious statement. One can understand how, if a man is emaciated, his bones may be said to cleave to his skin, but "flesh" makes nonsense of it. One must either strike out "flesh" as many modern scholars do, or adopt the reading of the Gr. and other versions quoted above, "My flesh rots in my skin." **I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.** This is a very puzzling statement. The phrase has become a proverb, but that does not aid us in understanding it here. Some have taken it to refer to the gums, and to mean that the leprosy had not yet reached these. This is, however, prosaic and improbable. The fact that the word "skin" occurs twice in the verse is thought by some to be suspicious, especially as several versions omit it here. They accordingly substitute for it "flesh" and read, "I take my flesh in my teeth," making Job repeat what he had said in 13 : 14. This, however, does not fit the context and seems improbable. It is better, since the teeth have no skin, to take the expression as a vigorous way of saying, "I am escaped with nothing at all." In this case we should drop the word "flesh" out of the first line, making the sense of the verse: —

> "My bones cleave to my skin,
> I am escaped with nothing at all."

21. **Have pity upon me, O ye my friends.** The recital of his woes moves Job to this touching appeal. From many points

For the hand of God hath touched me.
22. Why do ye persecute me as God,
And are not satisfied with my flesh?
23. Oh that my words were now written!
[1] Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
24. That with an iron pen and lead

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[1] Syr. Ar. *And were inscribed in a book.*

---

of view it is one of the finest artistic touches in the poem. Nothing could more graphically illustrate Job's humiliation than that he, the proud, strong man, who has poured out upon his friends his scorn without stint, humbly supplicates them for pity. This vain appeal to men also sets off with great force the expression which follows of confidence in God. The mental revulsion in this vain appeal to his friends brings back the confidence in God which he had twice expressed before, and now the feeling comes with renewed force, carrying him to heights which no one before had experienced. **The hand of God hath touched me.** Instead of "touched" we should read "smitten." Compare the smiting of the Servant of Yahweh, Isa. 53 : 4–9. There is fine irony in this ground for pity which Job urges. These sycophants of God, as he has called them, could hardly be expected to pity one whom God has smitten.

22. **Persecute me as God.** The persistent criticisms of the friends seemed to Job as relentless as the successive blows showered upon him by God. **Satisfied with my flesh.** "To eat the pieces" of a person is an Aramaic idiom for slandering him. This is a similar idiom.

(5) *Faith born out of despair*, 19 : 23–29

23. **Oh that my words were now written!** Appeal to his friends was vain. Job feels that all his contemporaries misunderstood him. No present vindication is possible. The thought arises, however, that, if the story could survive to posterity, those who came after would reach a more just decision concerning him: hence the expressions in this verse. **In a book.** The word does not necessarily mean a book, but a "writing" or "document" — something which may survive after Job has gone.

24. **With an iron pen and lead.** The expression is peculiar. Many interpreters take it to mean an inscription cut with iron in a rock, the letters of which were filled in with lead to prevent erosion by the weather. So far as appears, such an inscription

They were graven in the rock [1] for ever!
25. [2] But I know that my [3] redeemer liveth,
And that he shall stand up at the last upon the
[4] earth:

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[1] Theod. *for a witness.* [2] m. Or, *For.* [3] m. Or, *vindicator.* Heb. *goel.* [4] m. Heb. *dust.*

---

has not been found in antiquity. Others, accordingly, take it to refer to an inscription made on a tablet of lead with an iron stylus. The form of the expression is not very natural, if this is the meaning, but such inscriptions were known. **Graven on the rock for ever.** Job changed from the wish for an account in an ordinary book or document because of the perishable nature of the material. His thought passes on to a rock inscription, which, he declares, will last forever.

25. **But I know.** This is much better than the marginal reading "for I know." What Job means to say is that his wish for an imperishable writing to keep alive his memory for the fairer judgment of posterity is impracticable. Suddenly, however, the conviction for which his previous thoughts had prepared the way (see 13:16 and 16:19) bursts in upon his soul, and he sees that his vindicator is none other than God. He casts aside the passing thought of an impracticable writing to give expression to this great conviction. **Redeemer.** The word in Hebrew is *goel.* As this word is used in Num. 35:19 ff.; Deut. 19:6 and 12; and Josh. 20:3 and 5 in the phrase "avenger of blood," some scholars would translate, "I know that my avenger liveth." This is inappropriate here, since Job's blood had not been shed and the context does not exhibit him in an avenging mood. He does not desire vengeance, but justice. *Goel* in the book of Ruth means one who honorably keeps alive the memory of a kinsman (see Ruth, ch. 4). Job uses it to designate one who will vindicate his name and make his memory honored by posterity. The translation "redeemer" is unfortunate, as it long led scholars to think that Job was looking forward to Christ, while the thought really expressed is something quite different. **He shall stand up.** Literally, "he shall arise." **At the last.** The word in the Hebrew is an adjective. As in Isa. 44:6 and 48:12 it, like *goel,* applies to God, meaning "a Last One." **Upon the earth.** As the margin tells us, the Hebrew is "upon the dust." It probably refers to ashes, into which Job's form will be turned.

The conviction expressed in the verse is that Job's Vindicator, God, lives, and that as a Last One [*i.e.* one whose work can never be undone by another] he will one day stand over Job's ashes.

26. [1] And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
Yet [2] from my flesh shall I see God:
27. Whom I shall see [3] for myself,
And mine eyes shall behold, and not [4] another.

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[1] m. Or, *And after my skin hath been destroyed, this* shall be, *even from &c.* Or, *And* though *after my skin this* body *be destroyed, yet from &c.* [2] m. Or, *without.* [3] m. Or, *on my side.* [4] m. Or, *as a stranger.*

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26. **After my skin hath been thus destroyed.** The verse is a very difficult one. The revisers recognized this by giving us three translations of it. Many recent commentators have also freely emended the Hebrew text. The text is pretty well supported by the versions, however, and should probably stand as it is. Whichever one of the three renderings of the first line is adopted, it is clear that Job is speaking of the dissolution of the body. The easiest rendering is that which supposes "skin" to be used as a synonym of body. This continues the thought of v. 25. **From my flesh.** Is ambiguous. It may mean "without my flesh," or "looking out from my flesh." This last would mean, "while still in my body," a thought which is quite out of harmony with the context in v. 25. It is, accordingly, to be concluded that he means to say, "Without my flesh **Shall I see God.**" This is a new thought — a magnificent leap of faith! The body may perish, but the real man will see God. It is no argument against its genuineness here that Job has elsewhere (ch. 3, etc.) expressed a different opinion. The poem graphically portrays the free expression of the varying moods and contradictory opinions of a sick man. The gradual emergence in his thought of God's moral integrity and that God would be his Vindicator had prepared the way for this new insight. It is no argument against it that nowhere else in the Old Testament do we have the conception of the spirit surviving without a body to gain a vision of God. It is, however, a great poetic thought. It was the insight of a genius great in intellect and in religious power which put these words into the mouth of a sufferer.

27. **For myself.** The marginal rendering is possible, but the text is to be preferred. Job is asserting that he shall himself see God, and makes the fact that it will really be himself as emphatic as possible. **And not another.** We should read, "and not as a stranger." The Hebrew word means "stranger" and it gives a fine signification here. Job has complained that God is estranged; he longed for reconciliation (14 : 13 ff.); he had expressed the conviction that God would vindicate him (16 : 19);

My reins are consumed within me.
28. If ye say, How we will persecute him!
[1] Seeing that the root of the matter is found in [2] me;
29. Be ye afraid of the sword:
[3] For [4] wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword,
That ye may know there is a judgement.

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[1] m. Or, *And that.* [2] m. Many ancient authorities read *him.* These authorities are about 100 Heb. MSS. the Gr. Sah. Vulg. Targ. Eth. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *For wrath shall come upon the iniquitous.* [4] m. Or, *wrathful are.*

---

and now in expressing his conviction that he should see God he declares that God will be a stranger no more. God's mood of estrangement will then have passed. It is another fine leap of his faith in God, *i.e.* in God's essential goodness, whatever his present mood may be. **My reins are consumed within me.** That is, my whole being longs for this. "Reins" are often used in the Old Testament for the feelings or whole inner nature.

28. **How we will persecute him.** The verse brings us back from Job's fine outburst of faith in God and the future to the realities of his present unsympathetic surroundings upon earth. He addresses his friends, and assumes that they are nursing plans further to push their investigations into his case, or to ply him with their exhortations. **The root of the matter is found in me.** We should rather translate, emending the text according to the "ancient authorities" quoted above, "and we will find the root of the matter in him." The "root of the matter" is a vague expression and has been thought by some to refer to Job's sincerity; but, if we take the verse as already suggested, it would mean "we shall find the root of his suffering [*i.e.* his sin] in him."

29. **Be ye afraid of the sword.** God is just. Job feels assured that he will vindicate his reputation. In some way then he will punish these unjust friends. **For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword.** We should read with the versions cited, "For wrath cometh upon the iniquitous." That the sword was to be the instrument of "wrath" the previous line suggests. **That ye may know there is a judgement.** This, in Job's thought, was to be the purpose of their punishment. It is an inconsistency of human nature, which the poet has well illustrated, that even in the moment when his faith takes its greatest flight, Job can think of punishment as coming upon his friends for the very purpose for which they contended it had come upon him.

11. *Zophar's Second Speech — the Brevity of the Joy of the Wicked*, Ch. 20

20. Then answered Zophar the [1] Naamathite, and said,
2. [2] Therefore do my thoughts give answer to me,
[3] Even by reason of my haste that is in me.
3. I have heard the reproof which putteth me to shame,
[4] And the spirit of my understanding answereth me.
4. Knowest thou *not* this of old time,
Since man was placed upon earth,
5. That the triumphing of the wicked is short,

2. **Therefore do my thoughts give answer to me.** We should read with the versions cited above, "Not so do my thoughts give answer to me." To Zophar it seemed incredible that such hopes as those expressed by Job at the end of ch. 19, that God would vindicate him and give him a vision of Himself, should be entertained by a sinner. Job's chastisements, too, proved him a sinner. With reference to this he accordingly exclaims, "Not so do my thoughts answer me!" **Even by reason of my haste.** We should read with the margin, "And by reason of this my haste is within me." Zophar's strong dissent from Job's statements impelled him to answer quickly.

3. **The reproof which putteth me to shame.** A reference to Job's words. **The spirit of my understanding answereth me.** Neither the rendering of the text nor of the margin affords a good meaning. We should emend with the versions quoted above, and render, "Wind void of understanding answers me." The line still refers to Job's reply, and, like Eliphaz (15 : 2), Zophar calls that reply wind.

4. **Knowest thou not this of old time?** The question refers to the verses which follow.

5. **The triumphing of the wicked is short.** This is the theme on which each of the friends has harped in former speeches.

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[1] Gr. Sah. *the Minæan.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Not so.* [3] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *This.* m. Or, *And by reason of* this *my haste is within me.* [4] Gr. Theod. Sah. *Wind void of understanding answers me.* m. Or, *But out of my understanding* my *spirit answereth me.*

And the joy of the godless but for a moment?
6. Though his excellency mount up to the heavens,
And his head reach unto the clouds;
7. Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung:
They which have seen him shall say, Where is he?
8. He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found:
Yea, he shall [1] be chased away as a vision of the night.
9. [2] The eye which saw him shall see him no more;
Neither shall his place any more behold him.
10. [3] His children shall seek the favour of the poor,
And his hands shall give back his wealth.

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[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. *disappear*. [2] This verse is omitted by the Gr. and Sah. [3] m. Or, as otherwise read, *The poor shall oppress his children*. Syr. Vulg. Ar. *His sons shall be crushed by poverty*.

---

6. **His head reach unto the clouds.** The verse contains two exaggerated statements of the self-importance and pride of a prosperous man.

7. **Perish for ever like his own dung.** A very forcible simile, even if not elegant.

8. **Be chased away as a vision of the night.** We should read with the versions cited above, "he shall disappear." A dream does not have to be chased away. The verse adds to the metaphors which illustrate the transitoriness of the wicked man's career.

9. **The eye which saw him shall see him no more.** Because the verse is omitted by the versions cited above, some modern scholars take it to be a gloss. As Budde remarks, however, it does not appear as a gloss. The poet may well have added this statement of the complete disappearance of the wicked.

10. **His children shall seek the favour of the poor.** If we retain the present Hebrew text, the rendering of the margin is to be preferred, "The poor shall oppress his children." This statement affords a striking contrast to the once proud position of the rich man. Probably, however, we should slightly change the Hebrew and read, with the versions cited above, "His children shall be crushed by poverty." This suits better the last line of the verse. **His hands shall give back.** The text here is corrupt.

11. [1] His bones are full of his youth,
But it shall lie down with him in the dust.
12. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth,
Though he hide it under his tongue;
13. Though he spare it, and will not let it go,
But keep it still within his mouth;
14. Yet his meat in his bowels is turned,
It is the gall of asps within him.
15. He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again:
God shall cast them out of his belly.
16. He shall suck the poison of asps:
The viper's tongue shall slay him.
17. He shall not look upon [2] the rivers,

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[1] Gr. and Sah. omit vs. 11–14.

[2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *the rivers of the flocks.*

The man has, according to the supposition of the poet, already passed away. It is plain that his hands cannot return his wealth to those from whom it was taken. As several interpreters have seen, we must either read "their hands," making it refer to the "children" of the first line, or "his children," which would refer to the children themselves. How often it happens that the children of a man who has accumulated a fortune rapidly squander it and come to want.

11. **His bones are full of his youth.** The verse expresses in a poetic way the thought that the sinner dies young.

12. **Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth.** Sin is represented as a dainty morsel, in the taste of which one delights.

14. **It is the gall of asps within him.** That which was sweet to the taste often produces disturbance and agony in digestion. The author of Revelation uses this figure of quite a different matter; see Rev. 10: 9, 10.

15. **Vomit them up again.** The verse vigorously develops the figure begun in v. 12.

16. **He shall suck the poison of asps.** Again the figure is changed, and the sweets which he takes in his mouth turn out to be the poison of asps. **The viper's tongue.** Since vipers emit their poison through the tongue, the tongue is poetically spoken of as the poison.

17. **He shall not look upon the rivers.** Whether with the

The flowing streams of honey and butter.
18. [1] That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down;
[2] According to the substance [3] that he hath gotten, he shall not rejoice.
19. For he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor;
He hath violently taken away an house, [4] and he [5] shall not build it up.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *In vain shall he labor and shall not taste.*

[2] About 50 Heb. MSS. Syr. Ar. *In the substance.*

[3] m. Heb. *of his exchange.*

[4] m. Or, *which he builded not up.*

[5] Gr. OLat. Sah. Vulg. Targ. *did not build.* Syr. Ar. *it was not built.*

---

versions cited we fill out the line, or let it stand as it is, the second line explains what is meant by the "rivers." The abundance of sweet and luscious food, especially that which comes from numerous flocks and herds, serves in the Old Testament as a frequent synonym for all that is desirable. Some scholars by a slight change in the Hebrew make the first line read, "rivers of oil," which gives a good parallelism, but has no support from the versions.

18. **That which he laboured for shall he restore.** The verse is very difficult, and the variations of the versions show that the text is corrupt. Different scholars have sought in various ways to remedy it. The simplest way is to make two slight emendations on the authority of the versions and MSS. quoted above, and to read:

"In vain he labors and does not eat of it,
In the substance of his exchange he does not rejoice."

The verse continues the thought of v. 17. **Swallow it down.** This is the literal meaning of the Hebrew. It is a vigorous way of saying that the man does not enjoy the fruits of his labor.

19. **Forsaken the poor.** Some scholars by the change of one letter in the Hebrew obtain the meaning "grieved" or "harassed the poor." This is, perhaps, right. Since, however, the present text is supported by the versions, and gives a sense which is true to life, viz. that a wealthy man oppresses the poor until he has obtained from them all he can, and then abandons them, it seems better to retain the present reading. **Shall not build it up.** It is better, either with the reading of the margin or of the versions cited, to read "has not built up." The sin of the

20. Because he knew no [1] quietness [2] within him,
He shall not [3] save aught of that wherein he delighteth.
21. There was nothing left that he devoured not;
Therefore his prosperity shall not endure.
22. In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits:
The hand of [4] every one that is in misery shall come upon him.
23. [5] When he is about to fill his belly,

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[1] Gr. Sah. *safety in his possessions.* [2] m. Or, *in his greed.* Heb. *in his belly.*
[3] Theod. Syr. Sah. Targ. Ar. *be saved by that, &c.* [4] Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *all misery.*
[5] m. Or, *Let it be for the filling of his belly that God shall cast &c.*

---

man is that he has in his greed simply destroyed; he has left no compensation to society for all his gains.

20. **Because he knew no quietness within him.** As noted above, two of the versions have a different reading for the last part of the line, and one which, as many scholars have seen, makes better sense. The Hebrew word translated "Because" may also be translated "surely." The connection with the preceding verse would lead us to utilize both these facts and to translate the line:

"Surely he shall know no safety in his possessions."

He shall not save. On the authority of the versions quoted above we would change the voice of the verb here and render the line:

"He shall not be saved by that wherein he delighted."

21. **There was nothing left that he devoured not.** There was no survivor of his destructive greed. **His prosperity shall not endure.** He shall suffer the same reverses which he brought upon others.

22. **In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.** How often this proves true! The rich in the fulness of their sufficiency are not satisfied and are really in deep straits. **The hand of every one that is in misery.** Perhaps we should read with the versions cited, "The hand of all misery shall come upon him." It develops more naturally the thought of the first line.

23. **When he is about to fill his belly.** The Hebrew is very

God shall cast the fierceness of his wrath upon him,
And shall rain it upon him [1] while he is eating.
24. He shall flee from the iron weapon,
And the bow of brass shall strike him through.
25. [2] He draweth it forth, and it cometh out of his body:
Yea, the glittering point cometh out of his gall;

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[1] m. Or, *as his food.* Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *calamities.*

[2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *The missile passes through the body.*

---

strange. Four scholars have suggested a slight change in the Hebrew of the first word, which we should probably adopt. The first two lines would then read:

> "Jehovah, to fill his belly,
> Shall pour upon him the fierceness of his wrath."

Shall rain it upon him while he is eating. The marginal reading, like that of the text, gives no satisfactory meaning. By making a slight emendation on the authority of the versions, the line would read:

> "And shall rain upon him calamities."

This forms a fitting continuation of the first part of the verse. The thought set forth is that, as the man is seeking to fill himself with the good things of earth, God fills him with calamities and his fierce wrath.

24. **The iron weapon . . . the bow of brass.** It is God's purpose to destroy him. Accordingly as he flees from one peril a greater peril overtakes him.

25. **He draweth it forth, and it cometh out of his body.** The versions cited above give a far better sense: "The missile passes through the body." The poet undoubtedly continued the figure of the "bow of brass" begun in v. 24. That bow hurls its arrow so powerfully that it passes clear through the victim's body. **Cometh out of his gall.** This is the very figure which Job had used in 16:12–13 to describe God's treatment of himself. He had said:

> "He hath set me up for his mark,
> His arrows compass me round about;
> He cleaveth my reins asunder and doth not spare;
> He poureth out my gall upon the ground."

Terrors are upon him.
26. All darkness is laid up [1] for his treasures:
A fire not blown *by man* shall devour him;
[2] It shall consume that which is left in his tent.
27. The heavens shall reveal his iniquity,
And the earth shall rise up against him.
28. [3] The increase of his house shall depart,
His goods [4] shall flow away in the day of his wrath.
29. This is the portion of a wicked man from God,
And the [5] heritage appointed unto him by God.

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[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. *for him.* [2] m. Or, *It shall go ill with him that is left.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Destruction shall sweep away his house.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *The day of wrath shall come upon it.* [5] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *heritage of his wealth.*

Zophar by using the same figure in much the same way, to portray God's destruction of the sinner, doubtless employed it consciously in order to hint to Job that the remarks had a personal application. **Terrors are upon him.** The terrors of death.

26. **All darkness is laid up for his treasures.** This is a difficult phrase. The word rendered "treasures" means simply "hidden things," which here suggests no good meaning. It is better with the versions cited to omit it, and read simply, "All darkness is laid up for him." **A fire not blown.** One that needs no human breath to foster it, hence a fire of God.

27. **The heavens shall reveal his iniquity.** The verse reminds one of the words of Jesus, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed," Matt. 10:26.

28. **The increase of his house shall depart.** The Hebrew of the verse is unusual and difficult and does not afford a clear meaning. If we make the slight changes necessary to secure the text which the versions above quoted support, it would then read:

> "Destruction shall sweep away his house,
> The day of wrath shall come upon it."

This is a clear and definite meaning and also suits the context.

29. **The heritage appointed unto him by God.** The Hebrew is literally, "The heritage of his word from God" — a very unusual expression either in Hebrew or English. The Hebrew word rendered by the versions "his wealth" (see those quoted above) is identical with a word which means "his iniquity." This fits here admirably. The line would then read:

> "The heritage of his iniquity from God."

12. *Job's Second Reply to Zophar*, Ch. 21

21. Then Job answered and said,
2. Hear diligently my speech;
And let this be your [1] consolations.
3. Suffer me, and I also will speak;
And after that I have spoken, [2] mock on.
4. [3] As for me, is my complaint [4] to man?
And why should I not be impatient?
5. [5] Mark me, and be astonied,
And lay your hand upon your mouth.
6. Even when I remember I am troubled,

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Targ. *consolation.* [2] m. Or, *thou shalt mock.* Gr. OLat. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. *mock ye.* Sym. *stand ye.* [3] Syr. Ar. *Do I speak my complaint?* Gr. OLat. Sym. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *But why is my complaint?* [4] m. Or, *of.* [5] m. Or, *Look unto me.*

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(1) *Job challenges his friends' attention*, 21:1–6

2. **Your consolations.** With the versions cited we should read "consolation." In 15:11 Eliphaz had called the remarks of himself and his companions the "consolations of God" to Job. Job now asks them to be content to offer him this one consolation, that they listen attentively to his indictment of the moral government of the world.

3. **Mock on.** Many scholars read as in the margin, "thou shalt mock," and believe that the change from the plural to the singular was made in order to single out Zophar, who to Job's magnificent and moving utterance in ch. 19 could make such a brutal reply. The ancient versions are, however, almost unanimous in reading a plural here, "mock ye," and it is probable that Job scornfully refers to all his friends.

4. **As for me.** We should, perhaps, read with the Syriac and Arabic, "Do I speak my complaint to man?" Job feels that his complaint is to God, and it is no concern of these friends who have shown themselves so incapable of understanding it.

5. **Be astonied.** What Job is about to say will, he feels, greatly shock his friends. In Job's view, however, they ought to be more astonished at the terrible facts to which he will call their attention than at his statement of them.

And horror taketh hold on my flesh.
7. Wherefore do the wicked live,
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power?
8. Their seed is established [1] with them in their sight,
And their offspring before their eyes.
9. Their houses are [2] safe from fear,
Neither is the rod of God upon them.

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[1] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. omit *with them.*

[2] m. Or, *in peace without fear.*

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6. **Horror taketh hold on my flesh.** It makes Job shudder just to think of God's immoral government of the world. It is this of which his friends are ignorant and the utterance of which will astonish them. It is Job's conviction of this immoral government which constitutes the heart of his trouble. It has been with him all through his discussion. In two or three rare moments he has risen to a hope that God's present mood would at some time pass, and he would deal more fairly with his creatures. He has risen to the hope that he might find "refuge from God in God." At no time, however, has this hope driven from his mind the conviction that God's present government of the world is immoral, and Zophar's speech has for the moment driven away Job's higher thought and brought out all the ugliness of his bitter conviction.

(2) *God's immoral government of the world. The wicked are not overtaken by calamity, but live and prosper,* 21:7–34

7. **Wherefore do the wicked live?** Job's friends had each declared that the wicked do not live, do not become old, do not prosper. Job might have as a debater declared that life's experience did not correspond to these assertions. The problem is to him, however, far too painful a one to be made the means of a cheap dialectic triumph. He had just said that it filled him with horror. Accordingly he ignores the assertions of his friends and goes at the heart of the problem itself.

8. **Their seed is established with them.** "With them" is omitted by most of the versions as noted above. When taken in connection with "before them" it is redundant and makes the line too long. It should be omitted. Perhaps the fact that his own children had been destroyed led Job to begin his complaint of God's treatment of the wicked with the fact that he spares their children.

9. **The rod of God.** Which had so terribly smitten Job.

10. Their bull gendereth, and faileth not;
Their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.
11. They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance.
12. They [1] sing to the timbrel and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
13. They spend their days in prosperity,
And in a moment they go down to [2] Sheol.
14. Yet they said unto God, Depart from us;
For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
15. [3] What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?
And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

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[1] m. Heb. *lift up* the voice.

[2] m. Or, *the grave.*

[3] Gr. and Sah. omit v. 15.

10. **Their bull . . . their cow.** In a pastoral country the main source of wealth is the increase in the cattle. This verse accordingly tells how the wealth of the wicked increases.

11. **Little ones like a flock.** That is, as numerous as a flock, see Ps. 107:41. Job's grief over his own children causes his thought to return to this aspect of the wicked's prosperity. **Their children dance.** While Job's are dead. It takes a heart touched with a grief like Job's to understand how the sight of such dancing on the part of the children of such men would affect him.

12. **They sing.** That is, the wicked sing. The reference is not to their children, but to the parents. They have the leisure and zest, so it seems to Job, to thoroughly enjoy life.

13. **In a moment.** That is, they are spared the torture of a lingering illness. Job had frequently expressed the thought that he longed for death and it came not (3:21; 7:15). The wicked, he declares, in contrast live to a good old age (v. 7), and then die suddenly. They live joyously and die the easiest way.

14. **Said unto God, Depart from us.** Such non-religious or irreligious people are mentioned several times in the Old Testament and were a stumbling-block to many pious souls; see Ps. 73 and 123:4; Pr. 1:22; 3:34; 9:7; etc.

15. **What profit should we have?** Their argument is that

16. [1] Lo, their prosperity is not in their hand:
The counsel of the wicked is far [2] from me.
17. [3] How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?
That their calamity cometh upon them?
That *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger?
18. That they are as stubble before the wind,

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[1] m. Or, Ye say, *Lo &c.* Gr. OLat. Sah. *For their prosperity is in their own hands.*
[2] Gr. Sah. *from him.* [3] m. Or, *How oft is the lamp of the wicked put out, and how* oft *cometh their calamity upon them!* God *distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble . . . away.*

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religion does not pay. Sometimes religious people were tempted to think so too; see Ps. 73:13 ff. and Mal. 3:14.

16. **Lo, their prosperity is not in their hand.** This verse as it stands comes in strangely. If we render as in the Revised text, it is a pious exclamation on the part of Job, which is quite out of harmony with his present mood and argument. If we adopt the marginal reading, it becomes an objection of the friends, which Job anticipates — a procedure which also seems out of harmony with the argument. It seems better with the versions quoted above to make two slight changes in the Hebrew and render:

> "For their prosperity is in their own hands,
> The counsel of the wicked is far from him."

The verse is then a continuation of the portrayal of the point of view of the wicked begun in v. 15. They think that they control their own destinies, and their counsel is far from God.

17. **How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?** The rendering of the margin is clearly wrong; that of the Revised text alone fits the context. It is inconceivable that Job in his present argument should piously exclaim, "How oft is the lamp of the wicked put out!" It is fitting for him to ask it as a question, since a positive question is a negative assertion. Understood in this way the verse continues logically Job's arraignment of God's government of the world. He does not say that God never puts out the lamp of the wicked, that he never sends calamity upon them or distributes sorrow to them, but he does say that such instances are rare, and are not the general rule.

18. **That they are as stubble before the wind?** A continuation of the rhetorical questions of v. 17. The figure of chaff

And as chaff that the storm carrieth away?
19. [1] *Ye say,* God layeth up his iniquity for his children.
Let him recompense it unto himself, that he may know it.
20. Let his own eyes see his destruction,
And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
21. [2] For what pleasure hath he in his house after him,

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[1] m. Or, *God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. His eyes shall see his destruction and he shall drink &c.* The Gr. and Sah. omit v. 19.

[2] The Gr. and Sah. omit v. 21.

and stubble driven before the wind is applied to the wicked in Isa. 17:13 and Ps. 1:4. Job asks ironically how often this happens.

19. **Ye say, God layeth up iniquity for his children.** The words "ye say" are not in the Hebrew. The Revisers introduced them to imply that Job is anticipating an objection of his friends. There is, however, the same objection to this here which existed in v. 16. There is no reason for the marginal reading except that it was the translation of the Authorized Version. We gain harmony with the context by making a slight change in the Hebrew first suggested by Ley and adopted by Duhm and Peake. We should then translate:

"He does not lay up iniquity for his children,
He pays the penalty himself and knows it."

That is, Job declares that the sins of the fathers are not visited upon the children, but that such penalty as there is the man himself bears.

20. **Let his own eyes see . . . and let him drink.** As in the preceding verse, we should translate:

"His own eyes shall see his destruction,
And he shall drink the wrath of the Almighty."

Again Job means that such destruction as sin brings the man himself sees; it is not reserved for his children. That it does not often come upon the man himself he has already asserted in v. 17.

21. **For what pleasure hath he in his house after him?** We should say, "What interest has he in his house after he has passed away?" Job had declared in 14:21 that a man in Sheol knew nothing of that which was happening to his family on earth,

When the number of his months is cut off in the
midst?
22. Shall any teach God knowledge?
Seeing he judgeth those that are high.
23. One dieth in his full strength,
Being wholly at ease and quiet:
24. His [1] breasts are full of [2] milk,
And the marrow of his bones is moistened.
25. And another dieth in bitterness of soul;
And never tasteth of good.
26. They lie down alike in the dust,

---

[1] m. Or, *milk pails*. Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *his bowels*. Syr. Ar. *his sides*. [2] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. *fat*.

---

and in Eccl. 9:5, 6 there is a similar assertion. Job's point, then, is that to afflict a man's descendants is no punishment to the man.

22. **Shall any teach God knowledge?** This is an ironical reference to the friends. All that they have said sets forth the way they think God ought to run the universe, but he actually runs it in another way. Job suggests that they are really pretending to be wiser than God. **He judgeth those that are high.** Eliphaz had twice expressed the thought that God judges angels; 4:18; 15:15. It is a thought which sometimes finds expression elsewhere, as in Ps. 82:1; Isa. 24:21; and the Ethiopic Enoch *passim*. Job here takes up the statement of Eliphaz to make the thought that his friends could teach God how to improve his management of the world the more ridiculous.

23. **One dieth.** Job passes now away from the wicked man and takes an illustration from observation of life as a whole.

24. **His breasts are full of milk.** The word "breasts" is obviously unfitting when the sentence refers to a man. As the margin informs us, the Hebrew is really "milk pails," but even this reading in incongruous. We should either emend the text with one group of versions to read, "His bowels are full of fat," or with another group, "His sides are full of fat." He means that some die without an emaciating illness.

25. **In bitterness of soul; and never tasteth of good.** Job means to say that the joy or ease and the bitterness are not allotted according to any standard of rewards and punishments.

26. **They lie down alike in the dust.** Whether they have

And the worn covereth them.
27. Behold, I know your thoughts,
And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.
28. [1] For ye say, Where is the house of the prince?
And where is the tent wherein the wicked dwelt?
29. Have ye not asked them that go by the way?
And do ye not know their tokens?
30. That the evil man is [2] reserved to the day of calamity?
That they are [3] led forth to the day of wrath?
31. Who shall declare his way to his face?
And who shall repay him what he hath done?

---

[1] The Gr. and Sah. omit vs. 28–33. [2] m. Or, *spared in &c.* [3] m. Or, *led away in &c.*

---

suffered or not, whether they have sinned or not, one fate awaits them. The thought is similar to that of Eccl. 9: 2, 3.

27. **I know your thoughts.** The last half of the verse makes it clear that Job means that he knows that their discourses as to the terrible fate of the wicked were meant to convince him of his own sinfulness.

28. **Where is the house of the prince?** That is, of the wicked oppressor. According to the doctrine of the friends it was sure to be overthrown.

29. **Have ye not asked them that go by the way?** Job means that if they had asked those who have travelled and have had opportunity to see life in the large, they would know that this is a false theory.

30. **That the evil man is reserved to the day of calamity?** This rendering presents a meaning quite out of harmony with the context. We must regard "that" at the beginning of the line as a continuation of the question and as suggesting a negative answer and also must adopt the marginal reading. This gives us:

"Is it that they are spared in the day of calamity?"

As above, this question is equivalent to a negative assertion, meaning that the testimony of travellers, or men who have observed widely, is that the wicked are not spared in the day of calamity. **Led forth.** Here, too, the context requires the marginal reading, the meaning being that they are not led away to the day of wrath.

31. **His way to his face.** That is, the wicked man's way to his face. **What he hath done.** Viz. the wicked man.

32. [1] Yet shall he be borne to the grave,
And [2] shall keep watch over the tomb.
33. The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him,
And all men shall draw after him,
As there were innumerable before him.
34. How then comfort ye me [3] in vain,
Seeing in your answers there remaineth *only* [4] falsehood?

---

[1] m. Or, *Moreover he is borne to the grave, and keepeth watch over his tomb. The clods of the valley are sweet unto him, and all men draw &c.* [2] m. Or, *they shall keep.* [3] m. Or, *with vanity.* [4] m. Or, *faithlessness.*

---

32. **Be borne to the grave.** That is, have honorable burial. **And shall keep watch over the tomb.** This comes in strangely. If this translation is right, it must refer to the fact that an effigy of the man was placed over the tomb, which was supposed to guard it, and the poet in accordance with an ancient habit of thought identifies the man with his effigy. Many scholars, however, translate as in the margin, "they shall keep watch over his tomb." The meaning is then that the man receives honorable burial and that he is held in such esteem that his tomb is protected from desecration. Beer by a slight change in the Hebrew gains the meaning, "The tomb keeps watch over him." The marginal reading is, however, as satisfactory and is obtained without alteration of the text.

33. **The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him.** A fine poetic conception of the sweet sleep of death. The poet has made Job describe the wicked man's happy and prosperous life, his vigorous old age, his peaceful and painless death, his honorable burial, and then, he declares, that the very clods of the valleys are sweet to him in his pleasant sleep. **All men shall draw after him.** Shall imitate him. They will desire to live as he lived that they may die as he died. **As there were innumerable before him.** From the point of view of Job's mood and argument this is a fine touch. This wicked man had many predecessors. He is no exceptional case. By this one line Job suggests that such careers constitute a large part of human life.

34. **Comfort ye me in vain.** Job began in v. 2 by a reference to their "consolation." Here he returns to the emptiness of their comfort. **Falsehood.** The margin, "faithlessness," gives the literal meaning of the Hebrew. None of their exhortations

13. *The Third Speech of Eliphaz*, Ch. 22

22. Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
2. [1] Can a man be profitable unto God?
Surely he that is wise is profitable unto himself.
3. Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?
Or is it gain *to him*, that thou makest thy ways perfect? [2]
4. Is it [3] for thy fear *of him* that he reproveth thee,
That he entereth with thee into judgement?

---

[1] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Is there one who teaches God knowledge?* [2] Gr. and Sah. omit this half verse. [3] m. Or, *for fear of thee.*

---

correspond with the facts of life. The text gives the sense admirably. One who would console must speak that which fits life.

(1) *Job's punishment proves his sin*, 22 : 1–5

2. **Man be profitable unto God?** Eliphaz takes it for granted that God is so far exalted above mankind that man can be of no use to God. He asserts here by means of a rhetorical question that God does not need man's service. The phrase might well be rendered, "Can man be of service to God?" This view of God, while it seems reverently to exalt him, not only removes him far from man, but in reality greatly detracts from his character, making him an unloving, unsocial automaton. **Surely** should be translated "but." It introduces a contrast with the first half of the verse. **He that is wise is profitable unto himself.** Eliphaz believed that one's righteousness benefited himself alone. He mentions it here as a reason why Job should repent and reform.

3. **Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?** Eliphaz drives home his doctrine of God by means of further rhetorical questions.

4. **Is it for thy fear of him?** The text gives the correct meaning, and the reading of the margin should be discarded. "Fear," as so often in the Old Testament, means religious reverence of God. **That he reproveth thee?** Eliphaz asks sarcastically whether Job's present sufferings, which in his view constituted a reproof of the strongest kind, had been sent because of Job's proper religious attitude to God.

5. Is not thy wickedness great?
Neither is there any end to thine iniquities.
6. For thou hast taken pledges of thy brother for nought,
And stripped the naked of their clothing.
7. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink,

---

5. **Is not thy wickedness great?** So great a punishment could, so Eliphaz reasoned, only be caused by great sins. He accordingly proceeds in the verses which follow to find the sins. He had no specific knowledge of these sins, but takes it for granted that Job had committed them, because they were sins to which the rich were peculiarly liable. In ch. 31 Job specifically denies that he has been guilty of these deeds.

(2) *Eliphaz charges Job with specific sins*, 22:6–11

6. **Taken pledges of thy brother.** When loans were made to the poor by the rich it was customary for the latter to take some article of clothing or furniture from the former as security. This was called taking a "pledge." The Hebrew codes endeavored to protect the lives and interests of the poor by placing certain limitations upon pledge-taking; see Ex. 22:26, 27 and Deut. 24:6, 10–13, and 17. **For nought.** This is the sting of the charge which Eliphaz makes. To take a pledge was comparatively innocent in the eyes of all, but not so to take it for "nought." The meaning is, however, ambiguous. It may signify that Job had taken pledges without giving value received, or that he had taken them when no real necessity on his own part compelled him to do so. Either case would be a violation of what the Hebrews regarded as most pleasing to God. **Stripped the naked of their clothing.** "Naked" does not in Hebrew phrase mean absolutely naked, but is used of those who possessed only the inner garments worn next to the skin and who were without the warmer outside garment. Such a garment formed, as it does in Palestine to-day, the clothing of the peasant by day and his covering by night. Hebrew law accordingly provided that when such a garment was taken in pledge it should be returned at night, to prevent the debtor from taking cold; see Ex. 22:26, 27, Deut. 24:12, 13; compare also Amos 2:8. Eliphaz declares Job has shown his hardness of heart by taking as a pledge from the poor his one garment. Job makes answer in 31:19.

7. **Not given water to the weary.** The verse portrays the opposite of the ideal of righteousness set forth in Isa. 58:7, 10.

And thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.
8. But as for [1] the mighty man, he had the [2] earth;
And [3] the honourable man, he dwelt in it.
9. Thou hast sent widows away empty,
And the arms of the fatherless [4] have been broken.
10. Therefore snares are round about thee,
And sudden fear troubleth thee,
11. [5] Or darkness, that thou canst not see,
And abundance of waters cover thee.
12. [6] Is not God in the height of heaven?

---

[1] m. Heb. *the man of arm.* [2] m. Or, *land.* [3] m. Heb. *he whose person is accepted.* [4] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. Ar. *thou hast broken.* [5] m. Or, *Dost thou not see the darkness, and the flood of waters that covereth thee?* Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Thy light has gone out in darkness.* Syr. *Whence is darkness thou dost not see.* [6] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Does not God dwell in the heights?* Syr. Ar. *Did not God make high the heavens?*

---

8. **He had the earth.** It is better to translate "the earth is his." The thought is that the mighty man can take what he pleases, and the poor cannot help themselves. Siegfried and Peake may be right in regarding the verse as a gloss. The statement sounds like a proverb, and it interrupts the direct charges which Eliphaz is making against Job.

9. **Widows . . . fatherless.** Kindness to these formed a prominent feature of Israelitish righteousness as expressed in the laws and by the prophets; see Ex. 22:22; Deut. 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:17, 19, 20, 21; 26:12, 13; 27:19; Isa. 1:17; Jer. 7:6; 22:3. **Have been broken.** We should read with the versions cited above, "thou hast broken." Job's answer to this charge is found in 29:13 and 31:16.

10. **Therefore snares are round about thee.** It is thus that Eliphaz explains Job's suffering.

11. **Or darkness, that thou canst not see.** As the text stands, the line is a weak repetition of the last line of v. 10. The margin gives a sense equally pointless, for Job, as the whole poem shows, was only too conscious of his calamities. It is far better, accordingly, to read with the Greek and kindred versions, "Thy light has gone out in darkness" — a statement which carries forward the thought.

(3) *By the fate of the wicked Job is again warned*, 22:12–20

12. **Is not God in the height of heaven?** God is far exalted above the world of men. This is the thought even if one adopt

[1] And behold the [2] height of the stars, how high
they are ! [3]
13. [4] And thou sayest, What doth God know ?
Can he judge through the thick darkness ?
14. Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth
not ;
And he walketh [5] in the circuit of heaven.
15. [6] Wilt thou keep the old way
Which wicked men have trodden ?

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *He sees and humbles those who do violence.* Syr. Ar. *And he sees the head of the stars.*
[2] m. Heb. *head.*
[3] Gr. *on high.*
[4] Gr. and Sah. omit vs. 13–16.
[5] m. Or, *on the vault.*
[6] m. Or, *Dost thou mark.*

---

the reading of the Greek and kindred versions. The connection with the following verses is not clear. **And behold.** We should certainly read with the Syriac and Arabic versions "And he sees." **The height of the stars.** As the margin tells us, the Hebrew is "the head of the stars." Interpreters have been puzzled to know what this means. Some have thought of it as a special constellation, others, as the pole star. If the text is followed, with the one exception already noted, the verse is an expression of the exaltation of God. Possibly, however, emendations should be made partly from the Syriac and partly from the Greek, etc., so as to read:

"Did not God make high the heavens
And see and humble the mighty on high? "

The reference would then be to the power of God as exhibited in the creation myth referred to in 9:13. The "mighty" would then be the "helpers of Rahab" and the verse would form a fitting introduction to the warning from the fate of the wicked which Eliphaz is undertaking.

13. **What doth God know?** Eliphaz chose to think that Job pursued a sinful course because he persuaded himself that God was ignorant of what transpired on earth.

14. **In the circuit.** The marginal rendering "on the vault" is to be preferred. Probably it is a reference to the distant horizon where earth and heaven appear to meet.

15. **Wilt thou keep.** The margin, "Wilt thou mark," gives the meaning of the Hebrew and should be followed. Eliphaz is asking Job to note an example, not directly exhorting him to abandon a course.

16. Who were snatched away before their time,
Whose foundation was poured out as a stream:
17. Who said unto God, Depart from us;
And, What can the Almighty do [1] for [2] us?
18. Yet he filled their houses with good things:
But the counsel of the wicked is far [3] from me.
19. The righteous see it, and are glad;
And the innocent laugh them to scorn;
20. *Saying*, Surely they that did rise up against us are cut off,
And [4] the remnant of them the fire hath consumed.
21. Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:

---

[1] m. Or, *to*. [2] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *us*. m. Heb. *them*. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *from us*. [4] m. Or, *that which remained to them*, or, *their abundance*.

---

16. **Who were snatched away before their time.** Thought by some to be a reference to the antediluvians who were destroyed by the flood, but probably a reference to the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, as v. 20 shows.

17. **What can the Almighty do for us?** We should read as in the margin with the versions, "What can the Almighty do to us?" Eliphaz, if the verse belongs here, puts into the mouths of the ancient sinners the same sentiments which he attributed to Job. Verses 17 and 18 are, as several scholars have noted, a gloss made by bringing together several sentences which occur in 21:14–16 in a different order. If they are omitted, v. 19 follows v. 16 with much more force.

18. **Far from me.** As the versions cited above show, this should be, "far from us."

19. **Righteous . . . are glad.** A conception identical with Ps. 107:42.

20. **The remnant of them.** The explanation of the margin which makes this refer to "their abundance" is to be preferred. The reference to the destruction of their substance by fire makes it probable that the poet had in mind the destruction of the cities of the plain, Gen. 18, 19.

(4) *How Job may gain health and prosperity*, 22:21–30

21. **Acquaint now thyself with him.** The exhortation of Eliphaz begins here; in it he holds out to Job the hope of reconcilia-

[1] Thereby good shall come unto thee.
22. Receive, I pray thee, [2] the law from his mouth,
And lay up his words in thine heart.
23. If thou return to the Almighty, [3] thou shalt be built up;
[4] If thou put away unrighteousness far from thy tents.
24. And lay thou *thy* [5] treasure [6] in the dust,
And *the gold of* Ophir [7] among the stones of the brooks;

---

[1] m. Or, as otherwise read, *Thereby shall thine increase be good.* [2] m. Or, *instruction.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *humble thyself.* [4] m. Or, *Thou shalt put away . . . and shalt lay up.* [5] m. Heb. *ore.* [6] m. Or, *on the earth.* [7] Theod. Syr. Targ. Eth. Ar. *like.*

---

tion and amendment, as was done by the friends in their first cycle of speeches. No such hope was expressed in the second cycle; and it is strange that this address, which surpasses all the preceding for its harshness, should sound the note of hope at the close. Perhaps the poet meant to portray the fact, that, in closing, the old friendship asserted itself, and made Eliphaz long for Job's reclamation. **Good shall come unto thee.** Some Hebrew MSS. read, as in the margin, "thine increase shall be good." Either reading is possible from the Hebrew consonants, and either would probably express well the thought in the mind of Eliphaz.

22. **The law.** It is better as in the margin to translate, "Receive instruction." The Hebrew word for "law" primarily means "instruction."

23. **Thou shalt be built up.** Instead of this we should read with the versions cited above, "and humble thyself," making the line:

"If thou return to the Almighty and humble thyself."

If thou put away. This is the correct rendering. The suggestion of the margin is inappropriate to the context.

24. **Lay thou thy treasure.** The thought of the verse is that Job shall "cast away," *i.e.* cease to care for, his riches in order to care for God instead. The verse is omitted by the Greek and Sahidic versions and by some modern scholars. It seems, however, appropriate to the context and is probably genuine. **Dust** is correct; the marginal suggestion is not so good. **Among the stones.** It is better to adopt the reading of the versions quoted

25. And the Almighty shall be thy [1] treasure,
And [2] precious silver unto thee.
26. For then shalt thou delight thyself in the Almighty,
And shalt lift up thy face unto God.
27. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee;
And thou shalt pay thy vows.
28. Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee;
And light shall shine upon thy ways.

---

[1] m. Heb. *ore.* [2] m. Or, *precious silver shall be thine.*

---

above, "like the stones." Job is exhorted to throw away his gold as he would the stones of the brooks, than which nothing is more abundant in Palestine.

25. **Precious silver unto thee.** The word rendered "precious" elsewhere is used of something that is "exalted"; it is not appropriate to silver. The Greek and kindred versions read, instead of "precious," a verb, but none of the renderings seem appropriate. Modern scholars regard the text as corrupt, but have made almost as many guesses as there are commentators as to what the true reading was. The guess which seems most probable is that which substitutes "his instruction" for "precious." The verse then produces a beautiful parallelism:

> "Then the Almighty shall be thy treasure
> And his instruction, thy silver."

26. **Delight thyself in the Almighty.** Job's fellowship with God will be restored. For such fellowship Job had longed, see 13:24; 14:15; 23:1–7.

27. **And he shall hear thee.** This is in reply to Job's complaint, "If I called, he would not answer me," cf. 9:16. **Pay thy vows.** A vow was a promise to give something to God on condition that he grant a request. A good example is Jephthah's vow, Jud. 11:30 ff. The paying of vows is here mentioned as evidence that Job's prayers will be answered, if he follows the advice which Eliphaz is giving.

28. **It shall be established unto thee.** One sign of Job's harmony with God will be that he can carry out his plans.

29. When they [1] cast *thee* down, thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up;
And [2] the humble person he shall save.
30. He shall deliver [3] *even* him that is not innocent:
[4] Yea, he shall be delivered through the cleanness of [5] thine hands.

---

[1] m. Or, *are made low.* [2] m. Heb. *him that is lowly of eyes.* [3] Theod. Syr. Vulg. Eth. Ar. *him that is innocent.* m. Many ancient versions read, *him that is innocent.* [4] Gr. Eth. *And thou shalt be delivered.* [5] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *his.*

---

29. **When they cast thee down, thou shalt say.** The verse is difficult both to translate and to understand. As the text of RV shows, "thee" is not in the Hebrew and the words that are in it are, as the margin shows, capable of a different rendering. Moreover, in this glowing description of what will follow reconciliation with God, references to further humiliation of Job are inappropriate. The word rendered "lifting up" really means "pride" and "there is" does not occur in the Hebrew. Probably the verse originally contained a statement that God humbles the proud and exalts the lowly. If we make the first verb singular, and substitute "God" for "thou shalt say" — words not unlike in Hebrew letters — the verse reads:

"For God humbles pride,
But delivers the lowly."

The versions do not help us, and some such guess is necessary.

30. **Deliver even him that is not innocent.** This is a difficult verse. As it stands it says that God will deliver even the guilty on account of Job's righteousness — a thing which the epilogue (ch. 42) says actually happened. Possibly the poet let Eliphaz drop this hint of what the epilogue was to say. On the other hand, the versions had different readings. If we emend the text according to the citations from them given above, we reverse the meaning, thus:

"He shall deliver the innocent
And thou shalt be saved by the cleanness of his hands."

This is a more appropriate sentiment in the mouth of Eliphaz than the other, and is to be preferred. Perhaps it was changed to make it correspond with ch. 42.

It should be noted that the Greek and Sahidic versions omit vs. 29, 30. Probably they were omitted because they are difficult.

14. *Job's Third Reply to Eliphaz*, Chs. 23, 24

23. Then Job answered and said,
2. Even to-day is my complaint [1] rebellious:
[2] My stroke is heavier than my groaning.
3. Oh that I knew where I might find him,
That I might come even to his seat!
4. I would order my cause before him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
5. I would know the words which he would answer me,
And understand what he would say unto me.
6. Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
[3] Nay; [4] but he would give heed unto me.

---

[1] Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *bitter.* m. Or, *bitter*, or, accounted *rebellion.*

[2] m. Or, *My hand is heavy upon* (or *because of*). Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. read, *His hand.*

[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Then.*

[4] m. Or, *he would only give heed.*

---

(1) *Job longs in vain to come face to face with God*, 23:1–9

2. **Rebellious.** It is better to adopt the first marginal reading "bitter," as that is supported by several versions, and requires but a slight change in the Hebrew. The line means "My complaint is just as bitter as it was." **My stroke.** The word rendered "stroke" is literally "hand." We should emend to "his hand" with the versions above quoted. The verse then affords the clear meaning that Job's complaint is still bitter because God's hand (or stroke) is heavy upon him.

3. **Oh that I knew where I might find him.** The cause of this desire to find God is explained in vs. 4, 5.

5. **Understand what he would say.** This phrase gives key to vs. 2–5. Job's complaint is still bitter because he can obtain no satisfaction. God continues to afflict him but also eludes him. The inability to understand the reason makes Job frantic.

6. **Nay; but he would give heed.** Neither this phrase nor the suggestion of the margin affords a satisfactory sense. Probably we should by a change in the Hebrew of one vowel point translate, "If only he would give heed to me!"

7. [1] There the upright [2] might reason [3] with him;
So should I be delivered for ever from my [4] judge.
8. Behold, I go forward, but [5] he is not *there;*
And backward, but I cannot perceive him:
9. On the left hand, [6] when he doth work, but I cannot behold him:
[7] He [8] hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.
10. [9] But he knoweth [10] the way that I take;

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[1] 4 Heb. MSS. Vulg. *He would establish justice.* [2] Gr. Targ. Sah. Eth. *and would reason.* [3] Vulg. Targ. *with me.* [4] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Ar. Eth. *judgment.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *I am not there.* Syr. Ar. *I do not know.* [6] Syr. Ar. *I seek.* [7] Syr. Vulg. Ar. Eth. *I turn myself.* [8] m. Or, *turneth himself to . . . him, but. . . .* [9] m. Or, *For.* [10] Gr. Sah. Eth. *now my way.* Syr. Ar. *my way and my standing-place.* m. Heb. *the way* that is *with me.*

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7. **There the upright might reason with him.** While the Hebrew as it stands gives a possible meaning, the meaning is much clearer and the connection with v. 6 much closer, if we read with the authorities quoted above, "He would establish justice and would reason with me." **So should I be delivered.** Job feels that if he could once obtain a hearing with God, he could convince God of his innocence. If the divine misunderstanding were removed, there would be no further trouble. **Judge.** It is better with most of the versions to read "judgment." Job does not wish to escape from God, but only from God's terrible judgment.

8. **Behold, I go forward.** The verse is a beautiful expression of the fruitlessness of a search for God elsewhere than in the human spirit. God cannot be located on the earth or found at the end of a syllogism.

9. **When he doth work.** This comes in very awkwardly. The verse gains greatly in strength and connects much better with v. 8, if we read with the version cited above:

> "On the left I seek, but do not find him,
> I turn to the right, but do not see him."

(2) *Job, though innocent, is terrified by God,* 23 : 10–17

10. **The way that I take.** This rendering does not represent the Hebrew, which the margin correctly renders. It is better with the Syriac and Arabic versions to make a slight change in the

When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.
11. My foot hath held fast to his steps;
His way have I kept, and turned not aside.
12. I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips;
I have treasured up the words of his mouth [1] more than my [2] necessary food.
13. [3] But [4] he is in one *mind*, and who can turn him?
And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.
14. For he performeth that which is appointed for me:
And many such things are with him.
15. Therefore am I troubled at his presence;
When I consider, I am afraid of him.
16. For God hath made my heart faint,
And the Almighty hath troubled me:

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[1] m. Or, *more than my own law*. Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. have, *in my bosom*. [2] m. Or, *portion*. See Pr. 30:8. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *But he has decided*. [4] m. Or, *he is one*.

Hebrew and translate, "He knows my way and my standing-place." Although Job cannot find God, God knows Job through and through. **Tried me . . . come forth as gold**. The fact that God knows him so well is after all a comfort to Job, for conscious of his innocence, Job is sure that in the end he will be acknowledged just.

12. **More than my necessary food**. We should read with the versions quoted above "in my bosom."

13. **He is in one mind**. The Hebrew text contains no word for "mind." The versions undoubtedly contain the correct reading, "he has decided" or "determined."

14. **He performeth that which is appointed for me**. This is as good a rendering as can be made of the unusual Hebrew. The Greek and Sahidic versions omitted the verse. Some such statement seems, however, to be necessary to prepare for v. 15.

15. **Therefore**. Because of the unknown store of afflictions which God's treasury may yet contain for him. **When I consider**. Job had moments when he longed to come face to face with God. At other moments, when he thought of this side of the matter, he was afraid.

17. [1] Because I was [2] not cut off before the darkness,
Neither did he cover the thick darkness [3] from
my face.

24. [4] Why are times [5] not laid up by the Almighty? [6]
And why do not they which know him see his
days?

2. [7] There are that remove the landmarks;

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[1] m. Or, *For I am not dismayed because of the darkness, nor because thick darkness covereth my face.* [2] 1 Heb. MS. omits *not.* [3] Gr. OLat. Vulg. Sah. Eth. omit *from.* [4] m. Or, *Why is it, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, that they which know him see not his days?* [5] 2 Heb. MSS. Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *not.* [6] See new translation of this speech of Job in the note on 24:25. [7] Gr. Sah. Eth. *The wicked.* Vulg. *others.*

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17. **Because I was not cut off**, etc. Neither the text nor the margin affords a good meaning in the context. We should change the Hebrew text with the authorities cited above and translate:

"For I am cut off before the darkness,
And thick darkness covers my face."

The verse then clearly continues the thought of v. 16.

(3) *God encourages the wicked by deferring judgment*, 24:1–25

1. **Why are times not laid up by the Almighty?** Neither the text nor the margin affords a clear meaning. Such a meaning is, however, secured, if with the authorities cited above, we omit "not." The verse would then read:

"Why are times hidden by the Almighty,
That they who know him see not his days?"

His days. His days of judgment. The thought is that the courage of the righteous would be greatly strengthened, if they could know that at definite times the wicked would be punished. If there are such times, God conceals them.

2. **There are that remove landmarks.** We should read with the Greek and kindred versions, "The wicked remove landmarks." In Palestine, where the fields are often cultivated in common, each man's share being marked off by placing small stones, this was an easy means of robbery. The law of Deuteronomy condemns it, Deut. 19:14; 27:17. In Babylonia large inscribed boundary stones set up by kings to mark the borders of larger tracts have been found. These contain curses and sacred

They violently take away flocks, [1] and feed them.
3. They drive away the ass of the fatherless,
They take the widow's ox for a pledge.
4. They turn the needy out of the way:
The [2] poor of the earth hide themselves together.
5. [3] Behold, as wild asses in the desert
They go forth to their work, seeking diligently for [4] meat;
[5] The wilderness *yieldeth* them food for their children.
6. They cut [6] their [7] provender in the field;

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *with their shepherds*.
[2] Theod. Sym. Syr. Eth. *meek*. m. Or, *meek*.
[3] Gr. OLat. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah Eth. Ar. omit *Behold*.
[4] m. Heb. *prey*.
[5] Theod. Sym. Eth. *Sweet to them*.
[6] m. Or, *his*. Gr. Sah. Vulg. Eth. omit *their*.
[7] Gr. Sah. Eth. *by night*. Vulg. *not theirs*.

---

emblems designed to deter one from removing them. **Flocks and feed them.** Again we should read with the versions, "flocks with their shepherds." The verse refers to robbers on a large scale, who drive away flocks, shepherds, and all.

3. **Widow's ox.** This verse describes more characteristic wickedness. Hebrew law protected the widow and orphan from such exactions, Deut. 24:17, 19, 20, 21.

4. **The poor.** The margin, although supported by several of the versions, is probably not to be followed. "The poor" in goods is, as the context shows, the meaning here.

5. **Behold.** None of the versions contain this word. We should omit it. **Meat.** The margin, "prey," is better. **The wilderness yieldeth them food.** The Hebrew is peculiar and difficult. The revisers supplied the verb "yieldeth," which is not in the text. Modern scholars have suggested various changes to relieve the difficulty. The simplest solution seems to be the dropping of one Hebrew letter, so as to read with the versions cited above:

"Sweet to them is bread for their children."

The meaning then is that like beasts of prey they go out to seize food for their young. This verse together with 6–8 is out of place. Probably originally it formed a part of Bildad's third speech. See note on 25:6 and vs. 7, 8 below.

6. **Their provender.** By the change of one Hebrew letter we should read with the three versions cited above:

"They reap by night in the field."

And they glean the vintage of the wicked.
7. They lie all night naked without clothing,
And have no covering in the cold.
8. They are wet with the showers of the mountains,
And embrace the rock for want of a shelter.
9. There are that pluck the fatherless from the breast,
And [1] take a pledge of the poor:
10. *So that* they go about naked without clothing,
And being an-hungred they carry the sheaves;

---

[1] m. Or, *take in pledge that which is on the poor.*

The Vulgate reads, making a slightly different change:

"They reap in a field not theirs."

"By night" is probably right, as it is then that thieves usually work. **Of the wicked.** This phrase seems unsuitable here. As several scholars have noted, we should transpose the Hebrew letters and read "vintage of the rich." Thieves go where plunder is plenty.

7, 8. **Without clothing . . . they are wet.** These thieves make a poor living.

Verses 5–8 probably formed originally a part of the third speech of Bildad (see below on 25:6). The sentiment is similar to that expressed in 18:5 ff. by Bildad, whom the poet makes the least original of the friends. They are unsuited to Job's point of view and are out of place here. They were probably transferred from their original position to soften somewhat Job's unorthodox utterances.

9. **There are that pluck.** If we remove the interpolation, we may translate simply "They pluck." The sentence continues the description of v. 4, and the subject is the same as in vs. 2–4. **Of the poor.** Neither the text nor the margin affords a satisfactory sense. As several scholars have noted, by a change in one Hebrew vowel we obtain the word "suckling." We should make the change and read:

"They pluck the fatherless from the breast,
The suckling of the poor they take in pledge."

10. **Naked without clothing.** These poor children, reduced to virtual slavery, are not properly clothed. **An-hungred.** They are underfed. **They carry the sheaves.** They are put to hard labor in the field.

11. They make oil[1] within the walls of these men;
They tread *their* winepresses, and suffer thirst.
12. From out of the[2] populous city[3] men groan,
And the soul of[4] the wounded crieth out:
Yet God[5] imputeth it not for folly.
13. These are of them that rebel against the light;
They know not the ways thereof,
Nor[6] abide in the paths thereof.
14. The murderer riseth with the[7] light, he killeth the poor and needy;
And in the night he is as a thief.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *in distress.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *city and houses.* m. Heb. *city of men.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *are thrust.* [4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *the infants.* [5] Syr. Ar. and perhaps Gr. Sah. Eth. *does not hear* their *prayer.* [6] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. *walk.* [7] Gr. Sah. Eth. *darkness.*

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11. **They make oil.** The verse gives further details of the profitable labor to which the wicked men put the boys they have so cruelly gained.

12. **Populous city.** The versions afford the better reading, "From out the city and houses." **The wounded.** Again follow the versions and read "the infants." The reference is to the sucklings in pledge in v. 9. Child labor forces groans from them. **Imputeth it not for folly.** Once more follow the versions and read, "Yet God hears not their prayer." Job charges that God appoints no day of judgment, and that he does not hear the cries of distress from these innocent children. No wonder that the text was changed in the interest of Jewish orthodoxy!

13. **Against the light.** "Light" is not used in a moral sense. These men prosecute, as the following verses show, their nefarious practices in the dark. **Abide.** The parallelism is better if we follow the versions and read, "Nor walk in the paths thereof."

14. **With the light.** With the versions cited above we should read, "with the darkness." Crimes do not seek the light. **The poor and needy.** As several scholars have noted, these words do not afford a strong sense. The murderer is not so apt to kill the poor as somebody against whom he has a grudge. Two slight changes in the Hebrew would make out of these words "adversary" and "enemy." These changes should be made so as to read, "He killeth his adversary and enemy." **He is as a thief.** Merx noted that one letter had probably fallen out of the

15. The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight,
Saying, No eye shall see me:
And he [1] disguiseth his face.
16. In the dark they dig through houses:
[2] They shut themselves up in the day-time;
They know not the light.
17. For [3] the morning is to all of them as the shadow of death;
For [4] they know the [5] terrors of the shadow of death.

---

[1] m. Or, *putteth a covering on his face.* [2] m. Or, Which *they had marked for themselves.* Syr. Ar. *he had marked.* [3] Syr. Ar. *they seek for themselves, &c.* [4] Syr. *they find.* [5] Theod. Eth. *terror.*

Hebrew. If we restore it, we may translate, "In the night the thief goeth forth." The line should also be placed after v. 15. We then have a better connection with v. 16, and three kinds of sinners, murderers, adulterers, and thieves, mentioned in the same order as in the ten commandments.

15. **Adulterer.** This class of sinners also seek darkness and disguise in order to escape notice.

16. **In the dark they dig through houses.** "They dig" should be changed to "he digs." The Hebrew is not in the plural. As noted above, the last line of v. 14 should stand immediately before this. **They shut themselves up in the day-time.** The context demands that we render this as in the margin, except that we change the plural to a singular with the Syriac and Arabic versions. When the corrections here indicated are made the whole statement about the thief reads:

"In the night the thief goes forth,
In the dark he digs through houses
Which by day he had marked for himself."

They know not the light. This statement forms the general summary, and refers to the three classes, murderers, adulterers, and thieves.

17. **For the morning.** Probably we should read with the version cited, "For they seek for themselves the deep darkness." **For they know the terrors.** Again follow the versions and read,

18. [1] He is swift upon the face of the waters;
Their portion is cursed in the earth:
He turneth not by the way of the vineyards.
19. Drought and heat [2] consume the snow waters:
So doth [3] Sheol *those which* have sinned.
20. The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him;
He shall be no more remembered:
And unrighteousness shall be broken [4] as a tree.
21. He devoureth the barren that beareth not;

---

[1] m. Or, Ye say, *He is &c.* [2] m. Heb. *violently take away.* [3] m. Or, *the grave.*
[4] m. Or, *as a tree; even He that devoureth &c.*

"But they find the terror of death-shade." The verse, with its moralizing tone, is out of harmony with Job's theme and mood. It was probably originally with vs. 18, 19–23, 24 a part of the speech of Bildad and followed 25 : 6. The sentiments are similar to those expressed by Bildad in 18 : 10 ff.

18. **He is swift.** This belongs with vs. 17–22 and is probably a part of Bildad's speech. But in that connection "he" refers to God, and the verse continues the contrast between God and man. **Their portion is cursed in the earth.** This refers again to men who are impure. Perhaps it is at this point that 24 : 5–8 originally stood. Placed here, they show how "cursed" the lot of impure man is. **He turneth not by the way**, etc. The text of this phrase is hopelessly corrupt. It is impossible to extract any good meaning from it. Probably it was a gloss added after the editorial transfer of the passage to this position.

19. **Consume the snow waters.** Even from lofty mountains like Hermon, which is snow-capped until July and from which refreshing streams flow to the thirsty country around, the snow finally disappears. **Sheol . . . sinned.** If we are right as to the connection of this passage, it originally followed v. 22, vs. 19, 20 forming the conclusion of Bildad's first description of the punishment of the wicked.

20. **The worm shall feed sweetly on him.** The phrase is the most vivid part of a verse which continues the picture of the destruction of the wicked begun in v. 19.

21. **He devoureth the barren.** We should rather render, "One devours the barren," etc. The verse begins the description of a new class of sinners. For the rearrangement of the text see

And doeth not good to the widow.
22. [1] He draweth away the [2] mighty also by his power:
He riseth up, and no man is sure of [3] life.
23. *God* giveth them to be in security, and they rest thereon;
[4] And his eyes are upon their ways.
24. [5] They are exalted; yet a little while, and they are gone;
[6] Yea, [7] they are brought low, they are [8] taken out of the way as [9] all other,

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[1] m. Or, *Yet* God *by his power maketh the mighty to continue: they rise up, when they believed not that they should live.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *powerless.* [3] Gr. Sym. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *his life.* [4] m. Or, *But.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *His exaltation.* [6] m. Or, *And when they are &c.* [7] Gr. Sah. Eth. *he is.* [8] m. Or, *gathered in.* [9] Gr. Sah. Eth. *salt-wort.*

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below, on 25:6. Verses 21, 22 describe a class of powerful sinners of a very different sort from that which had preceded.

22. **He draweth away.** The marginal rendering, which makes the "He" refer to God, is not a happy suggestion. The verse is needed to complete the meaning of v. 21, and when one recognizes that it was probably a part of a speech of Bildad, the motive for the marginal change, which deals somewhat violently with the Hebrew of the last part of the verse, vanishes. **The mighty.** With the versions cited above we should read "the powerless." The heinousness of the crime of these mighty sinners lies, not in the fact that they destroy other mighty ones like themselves, but that they destroy the helpless. **Sure of life.** Read with the versions cited, "his life."

23. **God giveth them to be in security.** This verse resumes Job's original address and should follow v. 16. After describing the various classes of sinners that flourish in the dark, Job declares that God gives them their protection. He makes the darkness which shelters them.

24. **They are exalted.** With the versions cited read, "He is exalted." As several scholars have recognized, the verse is an interpolation in Job's speech, contradicting the general tenor of his thought. Probably it forms the last verse of the third speech of Bildad, connecting directly with v. 22. See note on 25:6. **They are gone.** The Hebrew has correctly "he is gone." **Yea, they are brought low.** Read with the versions cited, "And

And [1] are cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.
25. And if it be not so now, who will prove me a liar,
And make my speech nothing worth?

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *is*.

he is brought low." **Are taken out of the way.** As other scholars have noticed, this should be corrected to "he is drawn together" or "withered." **All other.** Read with the versions "like saltwort." This was undoubtedly some plant that withered easily. **Are cut off.** Read with the versions cited, "is cut off."

25. **If it be not so.** This verse resumes Job's speech and connects directly with v. 23. **Who will prove me a liar?** With this final challenge Job's third reply to Eliphaz closes. This section of the speech, when the interpolations are removed and the text corrections made, reads as follows:

1. Why are times hidden by the Almighty,
That they who know him see not his days?
2. The wicked remove landmarks;
They forcibly remove flocks and their shepherds.
3. Asses of orphans they drive off;
They take in pledge the widow's ox.
4. They thrust the needy from the way;
Together the poor of the land hide.
9. They pluck the fatherless from the breast,
The suckling of the poor they take in pledge.
10. Naked they go without clothing,
And hungry they carry the sheaves.
11. Within their walls they make oil,
They tread their winepresses and suffer thirst.
12. From the city and houses they groan,
The souls of children cry out,
Yet their prayer God hears not!
13. These are among rebels against light;
They do not know its ways;
They walk not in its paths.
14ab. At darkness the murderer riseth;
He kills his adversary and enemy.
15. Also the adulterer's eye awaits twilight,
Saying, No eye shall see me;
And he puts a covering on his face.
14c. Also by night the thief goes forth,
16ab. In the dark he digs through houses
Which by day he had marked for himself.

15. *Bildad's Third Speech*, Ch. 25

25. Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2. Dominion and fear are with him;
He maketh peace in his high places.
3. Is there any number of his armies?
And upon whom doth not [1] his light arise?

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *his ambuscades.*

16c. They do not know the light.
23. *God* gives them security and they rest,
And his eye is on their ways.
25. If it isn't so, who will prove me a liar,
And bring my words to nought?

Ch. 25. As shown in the notes of chs. 24 and 30, and the notes on 25 : 6 below, this speech has in all probability been abbreviated by the transfer of a considerable portion of its material to chs. 24 and 30. The motive for this editorial transfer was to soften the blasphemy of Job's utterances against God. When we restore those portions to what was probably their original position, the third speech of Bildad falls into three parts, consisting of the following verses:

(1) The purity of God in contrast with man, 25 : 1–6, 24 : 17, 18.
(2) The fate of wretched sinners, 24 : 5–8; 30 : 3–8.
(3) The fate of powerful sinners, 24 : 21, 22, 19, 20, 24.

A reconstruction of the last part of the speech is given in the note on 25 : 6.

2. **Dominion and fear are with him.** Bildad's opening words are a reply to Job's charge in the preceding chapter that God encourages and protects crime. Bildad declares that God has not only power (dominion), but suggests that he so exercises it as to produce reverence and fear. **He maketh peace in the high places.** So far from countenancing crime, God is the establisher of peace, Bildad asserts.

3. **Number of his armies.** Bildad refers once more to the familiar thought of God's power. **His light arise.** The Hebrew text is to be preferred to the versions cited. So far from encouraging sin by darkness Bildad asserts that God's light shines everywhere. Light, too, is pure, and this suggests the contrast between God and man which follows.

4. How then can man be just [1] with God?
Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?
5. Behold, [2] even the moon [3] hath no brightness,
And the stars are not pure in his sight:
6. How much less man, that is a worm!
And the son of man, which is a worm!

---

[1] m. Or, *before.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *he commandeth.* [3] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. *and it doth not shine.*

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4. **How then can man be just with God?** This has in the preceding speeches been a favorite thought with Eliphaz, see 4 : 17 and 15 : 14. It was a fundamental point of the theology of the friends. This theology clearly belongs to a post-prophetic period, when the conception of God was approaching that of the Priestly document.

5. **Even the moon hath no brightness.** It is not easy without forcing the Hebrew to make it yield this translation. It is better to read with the authorities cited above:

"Behold he commandeth the moon and it shines not."

6. **How much less man.** Bildad here returns to enforce the thought expressed in v. 4.

Many scholars have recognized that it is hardly possible that the speech of Bildad concluded here. For reasons given in the Introduction, p. 33 ff, and in the notes on chs. 24 and 30 it is probable that the speech was originally continued by the following verses from those chapters:

24 : 17. "For they seek for themselves the deep darkness,
But they experience the terror of death-shade.
18. He is swift upon the face of the waters,
Their portion is cursed in the earth.
24 : 5. Like wild asses they go out,
To their work of seeking prey;
Sweet is bread to their children.
6. In the field by night they reap,
And the vintage of the rich they glean.
7. Naked they pass the night unclothed,
And in the cold have no covering.
8. With the showers of the mountains they are wet,
And without shelter hug the rock.
30 : 3. They are lifeless from want and famine,
They flee to the wilderness,
The mother of waste and desolation.

16. *Job's Third Reply to Bildad*, Ch. 26

26. Then Job answered and said,
2. How hast thou helped him that is without power!

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4. They pluck salt-wort by the shrubs,
And roots of broom are their food.
5. From people they are thrust out,
They cry after them as after a thief.
6. In most dreadful valleys they dwell,
In holes of the earth and the rocks.
7. Among the bushes they bray;
Under the chick-pea they couple.
8. Offspring of fools, yes, offspring of nameless men,
They are scourged out of the land.
24 : 21. One devours the barren that beareth not,
And doeth not good to the widow.
22. He drags off the powerless by his strength,
He rises up and no one is sure of his life.
24 : 19. Drought and heat consume the snow waters,
Sheol, sinners.
20. The womb shall forget him;
The worm feeds sweetly on him;
No longer shall he be remembered,
For broken like a tree is unrighteousness.
24. His exaltation is brief, and he is gone,
He is brought low and withers like salt-wort
And cut off like the top of an ear of corn."

(For comments on these verses, see the notes on ch. 24.) Of course it is not certain that just these verses and no more formed the speech of Bildad. Several scholars have proposed different reconstructions, in which, with a few verses from ch. 24, they have included parts of ch. 26 or 27 which, as shown below in notes on those chapters, the present writer would assign to Job and to Zophar's third speech. Some reconstruction is necessary, as has been shown in the Introduction, p. 33. While no reconstruction can be regarded as more than tentative, the writer holds that the above best fulfils all the conditions.

(1) *Bildad has never helped the men whom he decries to be better,* 26 : 1–5

2. **How hast thou helped him that is without power!** Eliphaz had charged Job in 22 : 7 with refusal to help the weary and hungry, and Bildad, if we have correctly reconstructed his third

How hast thou saved the arm that hath no strength!
3. How hast thou counselled him that hath not wisdom,
[1] And plentifully declared sound knowledge!
4. To whom hast thou uttered words?
And whose [2] spirit came forth from thee?
5. [3] They that are deceased tremble
Beneath the waters and the inhabitants thereof.

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[1] Gr. OLat. Eth. *And declared sound wisdom to him who had not much strength.* Sah. *no strength.* [2] m. Heb. *breath.* [3] m. Or, *the shades.* Heb. *Rephaim.*

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speech (see note on 25:6), had taken great delight in contrasting the impurity of man with the purity of God. Job, exasperated, replies with an *argumentum ad hominem*, and asks, What have you ever done to help men?

3. **Plentifully declared sound knowledge.** The parallelism demands that we read with the Sahidic version:

"And declared sound wisdom to him who had no strength."

4. **Whose spirit came forth from thee?** As the margin notes, the Hebrew has "breath" instead of "spirit." Job asks in substance, "To whom hast thou given new courage, which was like the breath of life to the recipient?"

5. **They that are deceased.** Even if with the margin we read "The shades," the thought is the same. Bildad might have been the "breath of life" to these people, but he permitted them by his neglect to join the shades in Sheol. **Beneath the waters and the inhabitants thereof.** Sheol, the abode of the dead, was under the earth. There was not only a great sea on the earth, but an abyss under the earth also, see Gen. 7:11; Ex. 20:4. The sea was nown to be full of monsters, and mythical poetry known to the author of Job had pictured it with kinds as awful as could possibly be imagined (see quotation in the note on 9:13). Possibly these terrible creatures were thought to infest the subterranean ocean also. At any rate the passage supposes that the dead would be exposed to them. Some scholars have suggested that by making a slight change in the Hebrew letters we could read:

"And they fear the waters and their inhabitants."

This would give a more forcible meaning.

6. [1] Sheol is naked before him,
And [2] Abaddon hath no covering.
7. He stretcheth out the north over empty space,
And hangeth the earth [3] upon nothing.
8. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds;
And the cloud is not rent under them.
9. He closeth in the face of his throne,
And spreadeth his cloud upon it.

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[1] m. Or, *The grave.* [2] m. Or, *destruction.* [3] m. Or, *over.*

---

2. *God sees everything and is all-powerful, but is himself inscrutable,* 26 : 6–14

6. **Sheol is naked before him.** "Him" refers to God. Bildad had in his last speech (ch. 25 and additions) placed the purity of God and man in contrast. Job in this speech puts in contrast their strength and knowledge. His indignation at Bildad led him in his treatment of humanity to make a personal application to that speaker. Having set forth by one powerful touch in v. 5 the terrible fears which confront the dead as they descend into the dark unknown, he naturally passes to describe again the knowledge and power of God. This has been a favorite theme with Job, see 9 : 1 ff.; ch. 12, etc. Sheol, though hidden from man, God knows all about. **Abaddon.** A part of Sheol. See note on 28 : 22.

7. **The north.** Some regard this as a reference to the pole star, others, to the earthly mountains of the north. The parallelism of the next line favors the last-mentioned view. **Hangeth the earth upon nothing.** This is a striking phrase, almost seeming to anticipate modern views. It is hardly consistent with 9 : 6, where, as in Ps. 75 : 3, the usual view of the ancients that the earth was supported by pillars is expressed. The poet had apparently outgrown that view, though he could use it still in a poetic metaphor. That he entertained anything like our modern scientific theories, there is no reason to suppose. He simply refers to the fact that one of the mysteries of the universe is how the earth is supported.

8. **Waters in his thick clouds.** How clouds could hold moisture was another mystery.

9. **Closeth in the face of his throne.** Whatever the mystery of the clouds, they help to hide God's dwelling place.

10. He hath described a boundary upon the face of the waters,
Unto the confines of light and darkness.
11. The pillars of heaven tremble
And are astonied at his rebuke.
12. [1] He stirreth up the sea with his power,
And by his understanding he smiteth through [2] Rahab.

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[1] Syr. Ar. *He rebuketh the sea.* Gr. Sah. Eth. *He stilleth the sea.* m. Or, *stilleth.* [2] m. See 9:13.

---

10. **A boundary upon the face of the waters.** The "boundary" is the shore of the sea (the Babylonians called it the "salt river") which surrounds the earth. "Upon the face of the waters" suggests that here we have still a different conception of how the earth is supported. Two others have been expressed in 9 : 6 and 26 : 7 (see notes). Here, however, the earth is conceived as resting on the "face of the waters." It is afloat on the deep. It is the conception of Gen. 7 : 11; Ex. 20 : 4; and of v. 5 above. In matters of science the poet does not force himself to be consistent. The knowledge of the time was hazy. Various myths floated in the air, some of which the more thoughtful had outgrown. The poet represents his characters as using now one, now another, of these as suits his purpose. The characters thus appear to give house-room to inconsistent ideas, just as many people do to-day. **The confines of light and darkness.** Within the firmament or overarching sky all was supposed to be light; beyond this was darkness. Where sky and sea meet, the confines of light and darkness were thought to be.

11. **The pillars of heaven.** These were the mountains which were supposed to be at the confines of the earth. The Babylonians pictured the sun as arising out of them. These supported, they thought, the heavens so that its weight should not rest on the unstable sea. **Tremble.** When it thunders the very mountains at times seem to shake. This is poetically conceived to be God's rebuke of them.

12. **He stirreth up the sea.** With the margin and some of the versions we should read "stilleth," or with other versions, "rebuketh." The next clause shows this to be necessary. **Smiteth through Rahab.** "Rahab" is a Hebrew name for a Babylonian mythical sea monster Tiamat, who figures largely in the Babylonian Creation poem. A reference to her was made

13. [1] By his spirit the heavens are [2] garnished;
His hand hath pierced the [3] swift serpent.

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *The bars of heaven fear him.*
[2] m. Heb. *beauty.*
[3] m. Or, *fleeing*, or, *gliding*.

---

by Job in ch. 9 (see note on 9 : 13). The reference here is to how the monster was overcome. The Babylonian description is as follows:

"Then advanced Tiamat and Marduk, champion of the gods;
To the fight they came, to battle drew near.
Wide the Lord spread his net to enclose her;
The evil wind from behind he let loose in her face.
Tiamat opened her mouth as wide as she could,
He drove in the bad wind before she closed her lips.
The mighty winds tortured her bowels.
Robbed of her courage she opened wide her mouth;
The spear he seized, he pierced her body,
Her entrails he tore out, he took her heart;
He conquered her and destroyed her life;
Her body he cast down; upon it he stood."

This victory the poet, like all Hebrews who borrowed from Babylonian mythological lore, attributes to Jehovah.

13. **By his spirit the heavens are garnished.** In the context this seems an irrelevant statement. We should read with the versions cited above, "The bars of heaven fear him" — "bars" meaning the bolts or bars with which gates were fastened. The imagery is still borrowed from the Babylonian Creation poem, as in v. 12. After that poem had finished the description of the defeat of Tiamat and her brood, a part of which is quoted in the note on v. 12, it continues:

"The Lord rested, on her body he looked;
The body . . . dividing, he formed a cunning plan.
Like a flat fish he split her into two halves;
One half of her he stablished, he roofed over the heavens.
A bolt he fixed, a watchman he set,
Not to let out her waters, he commanded."

The meaning of the passage in Job is much clearer, if we emend the text with the versions and understand the "fear" of the "bars" to be fear to violate the command of Jehovah not to let out the celestial waters. Compare the water which came through the "windows of heaven" in Gen. 7 : 11. **Swift serpent.** This, whether we translate as the margin suggests or not, is a reference

14. Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways:
And [1] how small a whisper [2] do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his [3] power who can understand?

16. *Job's Third Reply to Zophar*, 27 : 1–6, 12; Chs. 29–31

27. And Job again took up his parable, and said,
2. As God liveth, who hath taken away my right;

---

[1] m. Or, *how little a portion.* [2] m. Or, *is heard.* [3] m. Or, *mighty deeds.*

---

to the conquered Tiamat, who is often pictured in Babylonian art as a serpent.

14. **These are but the outskirts of his ways.** Job declares that the revelations of God in his works, wonderful as they are, are just enough to make us dread his power, while baffled by the mysteries. The mystery of God is one upon which Job had often dwelt with indignation in earlier parts of the poem. As he thought how God was treating him, he had spoken with anger. His thought is here turning a little more away from himself to contemplate more calmly the mystery of God. With the statement of this mystery the present speech closes.

(1) *Job swears that he is innocent*, 27 : 1–6

1. **Job again took up his parable.** These words were in all probability inserted by the editor who rearranged the material in chs. 24–29. The usual formula of the poet is "And Job answered and said"; we should doubtless restore that here. This verse, too, with vs. 2–6 and 12 should come after v. 23, vs. 7–11, 13–23 being Zophar's third speech. In ch. 26 Job replied to Bildad. According to the plan of the poem an address of Zophar should come next. These verses, 1–6, 12, form the beginning of Job's reply to Zophar's third speech. See Introduction, p. 36 and notes on vs. 6 and 7 below. This rearrangement is indicated by the numbering of the section of the text.

2. **As God liveth.** Eliphaz had in his last speech directly charged Job with specific sins (22 : 4 ff.), Bildad in his had implied it (see reconstruction in note on 25 : 6, also 24 : 5–8; 24 : 19–23), while Zophar in his last effort (27 : 7–23) had also assumed it, as, like Bildad, he expatiated upon the punishment of the wicked. Job accordingly begins this, his last utterance before Jehovah answers him out of the whirlwind, by swearing his innocence in the most solemn manner. "As God liveth" is the formula for an oath, see 1 Sam. 1 : 26; 17 : 55; 2 Sam. 14 : 19; etc.

And the Almighty, who hath [1] vexed my soul;
3. [2] (For my life is yet whole in me,
And the spirit of God is in my nostrils;)
4. Surely my lips [3] shall not speak unrighteousness,
Neither [4] shall my tongue utter deceit.
5. God forbid that I should justify you:
Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from me.
6. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let [5] it go:
My heart [6] shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.

17. *Zophar's Third Speech, in which the Hopelessness of the Godless is set forth*, 27 : 7–11, 13–23

7. Let mine enemy be as the wicked,
And let him that riseth up against me be as the unrighteous.

---

[1] m. Heb. *made my soul bitter.* [2] m. Or, *All the while my breath is in me . . . nostrils; surely.* [3] m. Or, *do.* [4] m. Or, *doth.* [5] Gr. OLat. Theod. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. omit *it.* [6] m. Or, *doth not reproach* me for *any of my days.*

3. **For my life is yet whole in me.** The rendering of the text is to be preferred to that of the margin. The verse is a parenthesis. The oath-formula stands in v. 2, the contents of the oath in v. 4. This parenthesis states the relevant fact that Job is still sane. His body may be wasted with disease, but his mind is yet clear. This is said to anticipate objections which might be raised, on the ground of his condition, against the assertion of v. 4.

4. **My lips shall not speak unrighteousness.** The marginal reading is better. Job does not mean that he never will speak falsely, but that in the present instance he is not doing so.

5. **Should justify you.** By an admission of guilt. Such an admission would be **putting away mine integrity.**

6. **My righteousness I hold fast.** Neither Job's sufferings nor the arguments of his friends had shaken him from this. **My heart shall not reproach me.** The margin, "my heart doth not reproach me," is better. Job is true to conscience. In the face of God and the king of terrors he had seen that only fidelity to truth would stand (see 13 : 16); this vision still sustains him. The remainder of this last long speech of Job is found in v. 12 and 29 : 1 ff. See the notes there.

7. **Let mine enemy be as the wicked.** As other commenta-

8. For what is the hope of the godless, [1] though he get him gain,
When God taketh away his soul?
9. Will God hear his cry,
When trouble cometh upon him?
10. Will he delight himself in the Almighty,
And call [2] upon God [3] at all times?
11. I will teach you concerning the hand of God;
That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.
12. Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it;

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *that he should hope.* m. Or, *when God cutteth him off, when he taketh* &c. [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *unto him.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *will be entreated of him.*

---

tors have perceived, the last speech of Zophar originally began here. Doubtless it was preceded by the usual phrase, "Then answered Zophar, the Naamathite, and said" (cf. 20:1). An editor remodelled chs. 24–29 so as to make it appear that a part of Bildad's last speech and all of Zophar's were uttered by Job. This made it appear that Job was not so antagonistic to the orthodox doctrines of the time as he otherwise appeared to be (see Introduction, p. 36 ff.). Zophar is so sure of the terrible fate of the wicked man that he can think of no more fitting wish to utter against his worst enemy than that that fate should be his.

8. **Though he get him gain.** We should read with the margin, "when God cutteth him off." The reasoning is, that God cuts off the sinful man early, rewarding the righteous with long life. The sinner, when cut off, has no hope.

10. **And call upon God at all times?** As this stands it can only mean "will he call upon God throughout his life?"—a question which fits the context badly. We should emend the text with the versions cited above, making the verse read:

"Will he delight himself in the Almighty?
Should he call on him, would he be entreated of him?"

11. **Teach you.** Probably originally it read "teach thee."

12. **All ye yourselves have seen it.** As some commentators have perceived, this verse is a fragment of Job's address to his friends. It follows v. 6, closing his last reply to them, before he reviews his case and makes his final appeal to God in chs. 29–31.

Why then are ye become altogether vain?
13. This is the portion of a wicked man with God,
And the heritage of oppressors, which they receive from the Almighty.
14. If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword;
And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.
15. Those that remain of him shall be buried in death,
And [1] his widows shall make no lamentation.
16. Though he heap up silver as the dust,
And prepare [2] raiment as the clay;
17. He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on,
And the innocent shall divide the silver.

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. *their*.

[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *gold*.

---

13. **This is the portion of a wicked.** This verse connects with the thought of v. 11 and continues Zophar's speech. Having made a general statement about the fate of the wicked, he now proceeds to describe it in detail. **Oppressors . . . they.** Should probably be "the oppressor . . . he receives."

14. **If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword.** Zophar now states in a more bald way what Eliphaz had said on this point in 5 : 4 and Bildad in 18 : 19. When it is remembered that Job's children were killed in this way, and that the poet makes him express delight in the frolics of children (21 : 11), and wistfully long for the days when his children were about him (29 : 5), it is inconceivable in the face of Job's protestations of innocence (27 : 2–6) that the poet should have put this statement in Job's mouth. It clearly belongs to Zophar.

15. **Those that remain of him.** His surviving dependents or slaves. Punishment was not to be confined to his children. **His widows.** We should read with the versions cited, "Their widows," *i.e.* the widows of the dependents.

16. **Prepare raiment.** Costly garments are in the East one of the forms of investment for accumulated wealth (cf. Matt. 6 : 19, 20).

17. **The just shall put it on.** This is the orthodox doctrine of the time that the just obtained all the good things. Job had vigorously protested against it (see ch. 21). "Put on" shows that the reading of the versions ("gold") in v. 16 is wrong.

18. He buildeth his house as the [1] moth,
And as a booth which the keeper maketh.
19. He lieth down rich, but he [2] shall not be gathered;
He openeth his eyes, and he is not.
20. Terrors overtake him like waters;
A tempest stealeth him away in the night.
21. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth;
And it sweepeth him out of his place.
22. For *God* shall hurl at him, and not spare:
He would fain flee out of his hand.
23. Men shall clap their hands at him,
And shall hiss him out of his place.

---

[1] Syr. Ar. *spider.* Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *moth and spider.* m. Some ancient versions have, *spider.* [2] m. Some ancient versions [Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar.] have, *shall do so no more.*

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18. **As the moth.** We should read with the Syriac, etc., "spider." The frailty of the spider's web makes the comparison here very strong. **As a booth which the keeper maketh.** A booth was a frail structure in a vineyard for the shelter of the night watchman during the grape season; compare Isa. 1 : 8.

19. **He shall not be gathered.** Read with the versions cited, "shall do so no more." **He openeth his eyes, and he is not.** Sudden death takes him in sleep. The Hebrews were not averse to such contradictory statements as this line contains. Thus we have in 2 Kgs. 19 : 35 "when they arose in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses."

20. **Terrors.** The terrors of death coming in ways described in the following verses.

21. **The east wind.** The scorching sirocco, which saps one's very life. **Sweepeth him.** It is gusty and tempestuous (Ps. 48 : 7).

23. **Clap their hands at him.** The idea of the last couplet of the verse is that men shall scorn him and his memory. Some scholars regard it as an anticlimax and hold the verse to be a gloss, but there seems no sufficient reason to doubt that the speech of Zophar may have ended in this way. He may naturally have reasoned that it was an additional punishment to have the scorn of men added to the judgments of God.

An Interpolated Poem on Wisdom, Ch. 28

1. *Precious Metals and Gems are found in Mines, but* not *Wisdom*, vs. 1–6, 9–12
2. *No Bird, Beast of Prey, or Man has seen its Path,* vs. 7, 8, 13–19
3. *Wisdom is nowhere in the Universe except with God,* vs. 20–28

28. [1] Surely there is a mine for silver,
And a place for gold which they refine.
2. Iron is taken out of the [2] earth,
And brass is molten out of the stone.

---

[1] m. Or, *For.* [2] m. Or, *dust.*

1. **Surely.** As the margin shows, this word may be translated "for." That would seem at first sight to connect it with ch. 27, but logical connection with that chapter has been sought in vain. Duhm has suggested that "Where shall wisdom be found?" runs like a refrain through the chapter, and that the question once stood at the beginning of the poem. This seems probable, and if it were so, the "for" would come in very naturally. If the question stood at the beginning, it must have been removed by the editor who made the insertion to make the "for" connect with the previous chapter. **Mine.** The Hebrew word means "an issue" or "source," but the description which follows shows that a mine is intended here. This is the only extended reference to mining in the Old Testament. Although Deut. 8 : 9 described Palestine as "a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper," we have no knowledge that mining was practised in Palestine itself. There were, however, mines in Lebanon, Idumæa, the peninsula of Sinai, and in Egypt. If the poet had never visited these, he must have had ample opportunity to hear about them.

2. **Iron.** Knowledge of the use of iron appears in history considerably later than the use of copper. The earliest known iron has recently been found in Egypt in remains of about 1800 B.C. The use of it was apparently just making its way into Israel from Philistia in the time of Saul (1 Sam. 13 : 19). That was, however, several centuries before our poet. **Brass.** Better, "copper."

3. *Man* setteth an end to darkness,
And searcheth out to the furthest bound
The stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.
4. [1] He breaketh open a shaft [2] away from where men sojourn;
They are forgotten of the foot *that passeth by;*
They hang afar from men, they [3] swing to and fro.
5. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread:
And underneath it is turned up as it were by fire.

---

[1] m. Or, *The flood breaketh out from where men sojourn;* even the waters *forgotten of the foot: they are minished, they are gone away from man.* [2] Gr. Aq. Theod. Sym. Eth. *out of dust.* [3] m. Or, *flit.*

3. **Setteth an end to darkness.** By letting in the light when he digs a mine.

4. **He breaketh open a shaft.** The word translated "shaft" is in Hebrew the one which is used for a deep valley, dry in summer, but containing a stream in the winter rains. This is a slender basis, however, for the marginal translation "the flood." We should rather render "He breaketh a *wady* " or "valley," understanding it to be a figurative description of the shaft of a mine. This is justified by the word "Nile" for "passage" below. See note on v. 10. **Away from where men sojourn.** We should follow the versions quoted and read:

> "He breaketh a shaft out of the dust" (or "clods").

These versions had the poetic word for "earth" used in v. 2, which RV margin renders "dust." **That passeth by.** The italics show that these words are not in the Hebrew. They seem to spoil the beauty of the description. We should render:

> "Forgotten, without foothold they hang,
> Afar from men they swing."

The words describe the descent into a mine.

5. **Out of it cometh bread . . . underneath it is turned up.** The verse seems to draw a contrast between the peaceful processes of agriculture on the surface, and the fierce mining operations within the earth. Possibly there is a parallel rather than a contrast suggested. The earth is "turned up" above by the plough to secure bread, underneath as by fire to secure gems.

6. The stones thereof are the place of sapphires,
[1] And it hath dust of gold.
7. That path no bird of prey knoweth,
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it:
8. The [2] proud beasts have not trodden it,
Nor hath the fierce lion passed thereby.
9. He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
10. He cutteth out [3] channels among the rocks;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
11. He [4] bindeth the streams [5] that they [6] trickle not;

---

[1] m. Or, *And he winneth lumps of gold.* [2] m. Heb. *sons of pride.* [3] m. Or, *passages.* [4] Gr. Aq. Theod. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *uncovereth.* [5] m. Heb. *from.* [6] Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *depths.*

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6. **And it hath dust of gold.** The marginal rendering, "He winneth lumps of gold," is better. The poet begins now to describe what is found in the mine.

7. **That path no bird of prey knoweth.** Verses 7, 8 should probably come between vs. 12 and 13. The Greek and Sahidic versions omit vs. 5–9. The omission indicates that some disturbance of the text has taken place here — probably the transposition of vs. 7, 8 from their original position. If we restore the original order, we have after the question in v. 12, "Where shall wisdom be found?" first the statement that no bird of prey knows (v. 7), then that no beast knows (v. 8), then that no man knows (v. 13).

8. **Beasts.** See note on v. 7.

9. **He putteth forth his hand.** This should follow directly after v. 6. The description of the processes of mining is here continued.

10. **Channels among the rocks.** The Hebrew word rendered "channels" (margin, "passages"), is the plural of the word designating the river Nile. It clearly means "passages" here as "valley" meant shaft in v. 4. The description abounds in poetic hyperbole.

11. **He bindeth the streams that they trickle not.** In the context the poet is speaking of the way in which the miner uncovers secrets. "Binding streams from trickling down" fits in badly with such a description. We should read the line with the versions cited, "He uncovers the depths of the streams."

And [1] the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.
12. But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
13. Man knoweth not [2] the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
14. The deep saith, It is not in me:
And the sea saith, It is not with me.
15. It cannot be gotten for [3] gold,
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.
16. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,
With the precious [4] onyx, or the sapphire.
17. Gold and glass cannot equal it:

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *their power.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the way.* [3] Gr. Aq. Theod. *that which is guarded.* m. Or, *treasure.* [4] m. Or, *beryl.*

The thing that is hid. This fits the context better than the rival rendering of the versions given above.

12. **Wisdom.** The intellectual concept or the understanding of the idea which lies behind the universe. See note on v. 27.

13. **Man knoweth not.** Verses 7, 8 should immediately precede this. "Man" then stands last in a climactic series. See note on v. 7. **The price thereof.** We should read with the versions cited, "the way thereof." This continues the figure of vs. 7, 8.

14. **The deep.** The primeval abyss. See notes on 9: 13 and 26: 12. **The sea.** The ordinary sea as distinguished from "the deep." Verses 14–19 were not in the text used by the Greek translators and appear to be a later addition to the interpolation.

15. **Cannot be gotten for gold.** As the versions and margin show, the word "gold" is not really in the text. The word which does appear, however, is used in 1 Kgs. 6: 20 after gold in the sense of "refined." We are therefore justified in translating:

"It cannot be gotten for refined gold."

16. **Ophir.** A region, probably in Arabia, the gold of which is often referred to in the O. T., see 1 Kgs. 10: 11; 22: 48; etc.

17. **Glass.** It seems strange to have "glass" mentioned as a precious thing. While it was known in Babylonia from a little

Neither shall the exchange thereof be [1] jewels of fine gold.
18. No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal:
Yea, the price of wisdom is above [2] rubies.
19. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.
20. Whence then cometh wisdom?
And where is the place of understanding?
21. [3] Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living,
And kept close from the fowls of the air.
22. [4] Destruction and Death say,
We have heard a rumour thereof with our ears.
23. God [5] understandeth the way thereof,
And he knoweth the place thereof.
24. For he looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth [6] under the whole heaven;

---

[1] m. Or, *vessels*. [2] m. Or, *red coral*, or, *pearls*. [3] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. omit *Seeing*. [4] m. Heb. *Abaddon*. [5] 5 Heb. MSS. Gr. Sah. Eth. *established*. [6] Vulg. Ar. *all that is under heaven*.

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after 3000 B.C., and to the Egyptians at a comparatively early time, it was apparently so rare in Palestine as to be accounted among jewels. **Jewels of fine gold.** We should read, as in the margin, "vessels."

18. **Rubies.** Read with the margin, "pearls."

19. **Ethiopia.** Hebrew "Cush," equivalent to modern Nubia. Egyptian kings worked rich mines there.

21. **Seeing** should be omitted with the versions.

22. **Destruction**, or with the margin, "Abaddon," is in the wisdom books the name of the part of Sheol where the wicked are destroyed; compare Job 26:6; 31:12; Pr. 15:11; 27:20. In Enoch, ch. 22, we have a much more developed Abaddon than here. **Death.** Here a synonym of Abaddon.

23. **God understandeth.** Perhaps we should read with the authorities cited above, "God established," though the present reading suits v. 24 better.

24. **Under the whole heaven.** The reading of the versions cited, "all that is under heaven," is better.

25. [1] To make a weight for the wind;
Yea, he meteth out the waters by measure.
26. When he made a decree for the rain,
And a way for the lightning of the thunder:
27. Then did he see it, and [2] declare it;
He established it, yea, and searched it out.
28. And unto man he said,
Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
And to depart from evil is understanding.

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[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. Ar. *He who makes.* m. Or, *When he maketh.* [2] m. Or, *recount.*

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25. **To make a weight.** The reading of the versions, "He who makes a weight," is clearly to be preferred to either reading of the revisers.

26. **A way.** This line is borrowed from 38 : 25.

27. **Declare it.** Perhaps the meaning is that God expressed the qualities of wisdom by giving her a name. Wisdom in the poem up to this point is the intellectual idea or conception lying behind the universe, as it is in Pr. 8 : 22–31.

28. **The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.** Probably this verse is a later gloss, for it is the only religious note in the chapter and seems to contradict all that has gone before. Up to this point wisdom has been an intellectual idea, here it is the fear of the Lord. Wisdom has been declared to be inaccessible to all but God, here it is assumed to be possible for man. The one way in which the verse may be regarded as genuine is to suppose that the poet meant to say that, though real wisdom in this intellectual sense is inaccessible to man, God gives him religion as a substitute for it. That is an intelligible idea, and as we shall see (cf. note on 42 : 6) is found in the poem of Job itself. Had it been the intention of this wisdom poet to express that thought here, one cannot help thinking that he would have done it more clearly. It seems more probable, therefore, that some pious soul added this verse as a gloss.

(2) *Job longs for the joys, religious and secular, and for the occupations of his prosperous life*, ch. 29

1. **And Job again took up his parable, and said.** These words were undoubtedly inserted by the editor who rearranged chapters 24–29. They occur in the body of Job's last speech and cannot be the work of the poet.

18. *Job's Third Reply to Zophar* (*continued from* 27: 1–6, 12)

29. And Job again took up his parable, and said,
2. Oh that I were as in the months of old,
As in the days when God watched over me;
3. When his lamp shined [1] upon my head,
And by his light I walked through darkness;
4. As I was in [2] the ripeness of my days,
When the [3] secret of God was upon my tent;
5. When the Almighty was yet with me,
And my children were about me;

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[1] m. Or, *above.* [2] m. Heb. *my days of autumn.* [3] Sym. Syr. *When God hedged about my tent.* m. Or, *counsel*, or, *friendship.*

---

2. **Oh that I were as in the months of old.** Here begins the second part of Job's last long speech, of which 27: 1–6 and 12 form the first part. As the debate had proceeded Job's mind had turned somewhat away from his friends and had centred upon the relation of his life to God. He accordingly dismisses Zophar's last harangue with a few words, devoting most of his monologue to a final review of his case and his appeal to God. In the present chapter he goes over with wistful thoughts the days of his prosperity. The opening words of this verse express his longing for them. **When God watched over me.** In contrast with the way in which Job thought, as he had several times said, God was now treating him as an enemy; see, for example, 7: 12 ff. and 16: 12 ff.

3. **His lamp.** A metaphor for the divine light or favor shining from above; cf. Isa. 42: 16.

4. **Ripeness of my days.** As the margin tells us, the Hebrew really means "autumn of my days." Some scholars, thinking that such an expression could refer only to old age, have suspected a corrupt text. The autumn was, however, the time of the grape harvest and of rejoicing, and it is probably here a figure for "gladness of my days." **The secret of God was upon my tent.** With the versions cited we should read, "When God hedged about my tent"; compare 1: 10.

5. **My children were about me.** A pathetic touch. Next to the consciousness of God's favor he prized the companionship of his children.

6. When my steps were washed with butter,
And the [1] rock poured [2] me out rivers of oil!
7. When I went forth to the gate unto the city,
When I prepared my seat in the [3] street,
8. The young men saw me and hid themselves,
And the aged rose up and stood;
9. The princes refrained talking,
And laid their hand on their mouth;
10. The voice of [4] the nobles was [5] hushed,
And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.
11. For when the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me;
And when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness unto me:

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[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. omit *rock*. [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *my hills*. [3] m. Or, *broad place*. [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the listeners*. [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *blessed me*. m. Heb. *hid*.

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6. **Butter.** Literally "curd"; in the Old Testament a figure of abundance; see Deut. 32:14; 2 Sam. 17:29. **And the rock poured me out.** The Hebrew is peculiar. Perhaps we should read on the authority of the versions cited:

"And my hills poured out rivers of oil."

7. **When I went forth.** Job turns now from the blessings once enjoyed in his home to speak of the honor paid him in the old days when he appeared in public. **Gate . . . street.** In Oriental cities the city elders congregate in the gate and men sit about the streets for conversation. Such places correspond to the parliament halls and clubs of Western peoples. Cf. Ruth 4:1 and Pr. 31:23.

8. **Hid themselves . . . stood.** Evidences of the very great honor in which they held Job.

9. **Refrained talking.** One of the universal tributes of respect which lesser men pay to the very great.

10. **Was hushed.** This certainly gives the meaning. The versions are out of harmony with the context. Verses 21–25, which continue the description of Job's reception in public, should be placed here before v. 11.

11. **The ear heard . . . it blessed.** The verse begins Job's description of the way common people regarded him on account of his benefactions to them.

12. Because I delivered the poor [1] that cried,
The fatherless also, [2] that had none to help him.
13. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me:
And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
14. I put on righteousness, and it [3] clothed me:
[4] My justice was as a robe and a [5] diadem.
15. I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
16. I was a father to the needy:
And [6] the cause of him that I knew not I searched out.
17. And I brake the [7] jaws of the unrighteous,
And plucked the prey out of his teeth.
18. Then I said, I shall [8] die [9] in my nest,
And I shall multiply my days as [10] the sand:

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *from the oppressor.*
[2] m. Or, *and* him *that* had &c.
[3] m. Or, *clothed itself with me.*
[4] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. omit *My.*
[5] m. Or, *turban.*
[6] m. Or, *the cause which I knew not.*
[7] m. Heb. *great teeth.*
[8] Gr. Sym. Sah. Eth. *grow old.*
[9] Gr. Sah. Eth. *my youth.* Vulg. *in my nest.* m. Or, *beside.* Heb. *with.*
[10] Gr. OLat. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *the palm tree.* m. Or, *phœnix.*

---

12. **That cried.** Read with the versions cited "from the oppressor." **That had none to help him.** The text, which is supported by the ancient versions, is to be preferred to the margin.

13. **Widow's heart to sing.** Incidentally in his review Job answers the charge of Eliphaz in 22 : 9.

14. **My justice.** With the versions cited omit "My." **Diadem.** Read with the margin, "turban."

16. **The cause of him that I knew not.** This rendering is to be preferred to that of the margin.

17. **Jaws.** The margin, "great teeth," is better. The Herbrew word probably denoted the incisors or fangs of a carnivorous animal.

18. **I shall die in my nest.** It is difficult to decide whether this or the reading of the versions, "My youth shall grow old," is the original text. The present reading gives the more forcible thought. **As the sand.** Several of the versions read, "as the palm-tree." Since the palm lives to a great age, this may well have been the original reading. The margin of RV, "phœnix,"

19. My root is [1] spread out [2] to the waters,
And the dew lieth all night upon my branch:
20. My glory is fresh in me,
And my bow is renewed in my hand.
21. Unto me men gave ear, and waited,
And kept silence for my counsel.
22. After my words they spake not again;
And my speech dropped upon them.
23. And they waited for me as for the rain;
And they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain.
24. [3] If I laughed on them, they [4] believed *it* not;

---

[1] m. Heb. *opened.* [2] m. Or, *by.* [3] m. Or, *I smiled on them when they had no confidence.* [4] m. Or, *were not confident.*

---

is based on a Rabbinical explanation of the Hebrew word used, but it is doubtful whether the Hebrew word denoted the phœnix as early as the Biblical period. The phœnix was a fabled bird, which was said to live 500 years, when it burned itself in its nest and rose again from its ashes. The comparison would fit well here, if we were sure that the Hebrew word had this meaning. The comparison with the palm, however, is more suitable to v. 19 and is to be preferred.

19. **My root is spread out to the waters.** In a dry country like Palestine this was invaluable to the life of a tree, cf. Ps. 1 : 3 and Jer. 17 : 8. **The dew.** In the long rainless summer the heavy night dews help to keep vegetation fresh.

20. **Bow.** A symbol of strength, cf. Gen. 49 : 24 and 2 Sam. 1 : 22.

21. **Kept silence for my counsel.** As noted above, vs. 21–25 belong between vs. 10, 11. This verse continues the description of the deference once paid to Job in public begun in vs. 7–10.

22. **Spake not again.** Because Job's evident wisdom had convinced them, or because they were unwilling to oppose the opinion of the great man.

23. **As for the rain.** A powerful figure in a country where no rain falls from April to November.

24. **If I laughed on them, they believed it not.** As this stands it means that they could not believe that the great man, Job, would smile upon them — a thought not in harmony with Job's claim already expressed, that he was a great benefactor. The marginal reading is no better, for it leaves the thought hanging

And the light of my countenance they cast not down.
25. I chose out their way, and sat *as* chief,
And dwelt as a king in the army,
As one that comforteth the mourners.
30. But now they that are younger than I have me in derision,
Whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock.
2. Yea, the strength of their hands, [1] whereto should it profit me?
Men in whom [2] ripe age is perished.

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[1] OLat. Vulg. Ar. *was as nothing to me.*

[2] m. Or, *vigor.*

in the air. As several commentators have noted, we should omit "not." This gives the excellent meaning:

"I laughed upon them and they were confident."

The light of my countenance they cast not down. This is a most improbable statement and forms a decided anticlimax. The versions afford no help. Several scholars agree that, if we substitute for "cast not down" the words from v. 25, "comforted mourners," — words which seem to be out of place where they now stand, — both verses would be much improved. The line would then read:

"The light of my countenance comforted mourners."

25. **As one that comforteth the mourners.** As already remarked (on v. 24), the idea of "comforting mourners" probably belongs to v. 24. It spoils here the strong ending of Job's description of the position he once held among his fellow-men. That conclusion was:

"I chose out their way and sat as chief,
I dwelt as king in the army."

(3) *Job contrasts with this his present afflictions, ch.* 30

1. **But now** introduces the contrast of Job's present position with the happy and honored past described in ch. 29.

2. **Whereto should it profit me?** This begins a series of verses which scholars have found difficult to reconcile with their context; see note on v. 3. This verse fits well, however, if with the versions cited above we read:

"Yea, the strength of their hands was as nothing to me."

Is perished. We should render "has perished."

3. They are gaunt with want and famine;
[1] They gnaw the dry ground, [2] in the gloom of
wasteness and desolation.
4. They pluck salt-wort by the bushes;
And the roots of the broom *are* [3] their meat.
5. They are driven forth from the midst *of men;*

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *they flee.* m. Or, *They flee into the wilderness, into &c.* [2] m. Or, which *yesternight* was, or, *on the eve of.* [3] Or, *to warm them.*

---

3. **They are gaunt.** Translate rather "They are stiff" or "lifeless." **They gnaw the dry ground.** Read rather with the versions and the margin, "They flee into the wilderness." **The gloom of wasteness and desolation.** The word rendered "gloom," as the margin recognizes, does not have that meaning. Neither of the marginal readings gives a clear sense. It is better to accept a slight change of the Hebrew text suggested by several scholars and read "mother of waste and desolation." The whole verse would then read:

"They are lifeless from want and famine,
They flee to the wilderness,
The mother of waste and desolation."

Several scholars have noticed that this verse together with vs. 4–8 are unsuited to their context, as they also think v. 2 is. Men who had been so driven to the wilderness and had become outcasts could not thus laugh at Job, or if they did their laughter could do him no harm. Moreover, the tone of contempt running through the verses seems out of place in his present speech. If v. 9 is joined to v. 2 as v. 2 has been interpreted above, it gives a much simpler and stronger meaning. Some scholars have noted how well these verses continue the thought of 24 : 5–8 and have accordingly placed them in ch. 24. As we have seen reason to believe that those verses belong in the speech of Bildad in ch. 25, we should place these verses there also. See note on 25 : 6.

4. **Salt-wort.** A plant which grows in several varieties in salt marshes. **The roots of broom are their meat.** Broom is a desert shrub which makes hot coals; see Ps. 120 : 4, where it is rendered "juniper." As its roots are bitter, many scholars prefer the reading of the margin, but the translation of the text is more appropriate here.

5. **They are driven forth . . . thief.** If we place this in connection with 24 : 6, we see that they really were thieves and would naturally be driven forth.

They cry after them as after a thief.
6. [1] In the clefts of the valleys must they dwell,
In holes of the earth and of the rocks.
7. Among the bushes they bray;
Under the [2] nettles they [3] are gathered together.
8. *They are* children of fools, yea, children of [4] base men;
They [5] were scourged out of the land.
9. And now I am become their song,
Yea, I am a byword unto them.
10. They abhor me, they stand aloof from me,
And spare not to spit [6] in my face.
11. For he hath loosed [7] his cord, and afflicted me,
And [8] they have cast off the bridle before me.

6. **In the clefts of the valleys.** For "clefts" read "most dreadful," or as in the margin, "most gloomy." Such valleys are the hiding-places of outcasts.

7. **They are gathered together.** The versions and the margin afford a variety of renderings. Perhaps we should read "are joined" or "they couple." Possibly the meaning is that they misbeget as they were misbegotten. Verse 8 suggests this. "Bray" would then be used as in Jer. 5 : 8.

8. **Base men.** With the margin we should read "nameless men." They are a horde of base-born or illegally born fellows.

9. **And now I am become their song.** This connects with v. 2 and continues Job's description of how these who once honored him now scorn him. We should, however, read, "But now."

10. **In my face.** Read with the margin, "at the sight of me."

11. **He hath loosed.** The reference is to God. Job attributes the great change in his circumstances to God's treatment of him. **His cord.** Read with the margin "my cord." The loosening of a tent cord made the tent collapse; the loosening of a bowstring rendered its possessor defenceless. To which figure Job refers is not clear. Either would be effective in the context. **They have cast off.** Read with the versions "he hath," etc. Without a bridle the steed is ungovernable.

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[1] m. Or, *In the most gloomy valleys.*
[2] m. Or, *wild vetches.*
[3] Gr. *live.* Vulg. Targ. *are numbered.* Eth. *hide themselves.* m. Or, *stretch themselves.*
[4] m. Heb. men of *no name.*
[5] m. Or, *are outcasts from the land.*
[6] m. Or, *at the sight of me.*
[7] m. According to another ancient reading [Syr. Targ. Ar. and Heb. tradition] *my cord* (or *my bowstring*).
[8] Theod. Vulg. Eth. *he.*

12. Upon my right hand rise the [1] rabble;
They thrust aside my feet,
And they cast up against me their ways of destruction.
13. They [2] mar my path,
They set forward my calamity,
[3] *Even* men that have no helper.
14. [4] As through a wide breach they come:
In the midst of the ruin they roll themselves *upon me.*
15. Terrors are turned upon me,
[5] They chase [6] mine honour as the wind;
And my welfare is passed away as a cloud.
16. And now my soul is poured out [7] within me;
Days of affliction have taken hold upon me.
17. In the night season my bones are [8] pierced [9] in me,

---

[1] m. Or, *brood.*
[2] m. Or, *break up.*
[3] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *At me they hurl their darts.*
[4] m. *As a wide breaking-in* of waters.
[5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *My hope is pursued.* Syr. Ar. *They pursue my paths.* m. Or, *Thou chasest.*
[6] m. Or, *my nobility.*
[7] m. Heb. *upon.*
[8] m. Or, *corroded* and drop *away from me.*
[9] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. omit *in me.* m. Heb. *from off.*

---

12. **Upon my right hand.** The right hand was usually the lucky side. It is a measure of Job's misfortune that it is now just here that the rabble rise against him. **Thrust aside my feet.** The words afford no good meaning in the context, and as several commentators have noted, probably arose from an accidental insertion here of a part of v. 11. We should omit them. **Cast up against me their ways of destruction.** As men do in a siege. It is a military figure.

13. **Even men that have no helper.** It is much better to read with the versions cited, "At me they hurl their darts." Such a sentence continues the figure of the siege.

14. **As through a . . . breach they come.** This is far preferable to the suggestion of the margin. It still continues the figure of a siege.

15. **They chase mine honour.** Probably with the Greek and kindred versions we should read, "My hope is chased away like the wind." This gives an excellent parallelism with the next line.

17. **Pierced.** This rendering is better than the one in the margin. It graphically describes the pain from which Job

And [1] the *pains* that gnaw me take no rest.
18. [2] By the great force *of my disease* is my garment disfigured:
It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.
19. He hath cast me into the mire,
And I am become like dust and ashes.
20. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not answer me:
[3] I stand up, and thou [4] lookest at me.
21. Thou art turned to be cruel to me:
With the might of thy hand [5] thou persecutest me.
22. Thou liftest me up to the wind, thou causest me to ride *upon it;*
And thou dissolvest me in the storm.

---

[1] m. Or, *my sinews take &c.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *With great strength my garment clings.* m. Or, *By his great force is &c.* [3] Syr. Ar. *Thou standest.* [4] Vulg. *dost not look at me.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *thou scourgest me.*

---

suffered. **In me.** The Hebrew is literally "from upon me" — a very difficult phrase. It should be omitted with the versions cited. **The pains that gnaw me.** Literally "the gnawers of me."

18. **By the great force of my disease is my garment disfigured.** The Hebrew contains no word for "disease." We should read with the versions cited "With great force my garment clings." The pus from his sores was the cause of the clinging, which would itself be torture. **As the collar.** The long flowing Oriental robe clung to the sores as closely as the collar to the neck.

20. **I stand up.** Read with the versions cited, "Thou standest." **And thou lookest at me.** Read with the Vulgate, "dost not look at me." Job complains that God takes notice neither of his agony nor his supplication.

21. **Thou persecutest me.** The Hebrew word does not mean "persecute," but "bear a grudge against" — a sense not appropriate. We should read with the versions cited by making a slight change, "thou scourgest me."

22. **Thou liftest me up to the wind.** Under a different figure the poet in this verse beautifully carries on the thought.

23. **Thou wilt bring me to death.** Job has before asserted that it was God's purpose to slay him (see note on 13:15) and that thought still persists in his mind.

23. For I know that thou wilt bring me to death,
And to [1] the house appointed for all living.
24. [2] Surely against a ruinous heap he will not put forth his hand;
Though *it be* in his destruction, *one may utter* a cry because of these things.
25. Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?
Was not my soul grieved for the needy?
26. When I looked for good, then evil came;
And when I waited for light, there came darkness.
27. My bowels boil, and rest not;
Days of affliction are come upon me.
28. I go [3] mourning without the sun:
I stand up in the assembly, and cry for help.

---

[1] m. Or, *the house of meeting for &c.* [2] m. Or, *Howbeit doth not one stretch out the hand in his fall? or in his calamity therefore cry for help?* [3] m. Or, *blackened, but not by the sun.*

---

24. **Surely against a ruinous heap.** The marginal rendering of the whole verse is much preferable to the text. If we read:

> "Howbeit doth not one stretch out his hand in his fall?
> Or in his calamity therefore cry for help?"

we obtain this intelligible thought: Job knows that his ruin is certain, but it is natural nevertheless to put out his hand to break his fall and to cry for aid.

25. **Did not I weep?** Job had sympathized with others' sorrows.

26. **When I looked for good, then evil came.** He marvels that there is no corresponding pity for him.

27. **My bowels boil.** "Bowels" in Biblical phrase is equal to "feelings." Job was a tumult of conflicting emotions.

28. **Mourning without the sun.** This phrase is improbable, as Job was not deprived of the sun. The margin, "blackened but not by the sun," fits well Job's physical condition, made black as he was by the scabs of the disease (see v. 30), but unfortunately the Hebrew word means "mourning." Probably with some recent commentators we should add one letter to the Hebrew and read, "I go mourning without comfort." **In the assembly, and cry for help.** This is strange. In what assembly could Job stand? Again following the same commentators, by the change

29. I am a brother to jackals,
And a companion to ostriches.
30. My skin [1] is black, *and falleth* from me,
And my bones are burned with heat.
31. Therefore is my harp *turned* to mourning,
And my pipe into the voice of them that weep.
31. I made a covenant with mine eyes;
[2] How then should I look upon a maid?
2. [3] For what *is* the portion of God from above,
And the heritage of the Almighty from on high?

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *is black exceedingly.* [2] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *not to look.* [3] m. Or, *For what portion should I have of God . . . and what heritage &c.? Is there not calamity &c.?*

---

of a single letter we obtain, "I stand up in the assembly of jackals." This is in accord with the following verse.

29. **Jackals**. Better, "wolves." **Ostriches**. Jackals, wolves, and ostriches all are noted for their distressing cries; see Micah 1 : 8.

30. **Falleth from me**. "Falleth from" is not in the Hebrew. It is better with the versions cited to read, "is black exceedingly." The verse depicts the effects of Job's disease.

31. **My harp turned to mourning**. The force of the verse is greater, if we take it as a reiteration of v. 24. See note on that verse.

(4) *Job protests his innocence and appeals to the Almighty*, ch. 31

1. **How then should I look upon a maid**? Read with the versions cited, "Not to look." As the words stand the chapter begins most abruptly with a resolve not to commit a very prevalent sin — especially prevalent with the owner of large numbers of slaves. The reason assigned is a general statement of God's moral government of the world (v. 3). We should expect at the beginning an equally general statement of the sin from which Job resolved to keep himself free, especially as in the enumeration of particular sins of which he is innocent, which follows, Job has included sins with women (v. 9). We should adopt a slight change of the Hebrew suggested by Peake and read:

"I made a covenant with mine eyes,
Not to look upon folly."

2. **For what . . . portion**. Job as a young man asked himself these questions before calamity came.

3. Is it not calamity to the unrighteous,
And disaster to the workers of iniquity?
4. Doth not he see my ways,
And number all my steps?
5. If I have walked with vanity,
And my foot hath hasted to deceit;
6. (Let me be weighed in an even balance,
That God may know mine integrity;)
7. If my step hath turned out of the way,
And mine heart walked after mine eyes,
And if any spot hath cleaved to mine hands:
8. Then let me sow, and let another eat;
Yea, let [1] the produce of my field be rooted out.

---

[1] m. Or, *my offspring*. Heb. *my produce*.

---

3. **Calamity to the unrighteous.** As a young man he recognized this general principle on which the friends have all along insisted.

4. **Doth not he see my ways?** Job recognized that the general principle applied, through the omniscience of God, to his particular case. This was in his youth the ground of his resolve expressed in v. 1; it is now the ground of his protestation of innocence, and his appeal to God (vs. 6 and 35).

5. **With vanity.** Rather "falsehood" — a general term like "folly" in v. 1.

6. **Weighed in an even balance.** An even balance is a just one. Job would not be found wanting, cf. Dan. 5 : 27. **That God may know mine integrity.** The poet portrays in this poem how a larger conception of God wavers and flickers in the mind as it is being born. Job started out as a young man with a belief in God's goodness and omniscience (vs. 2, 3). His calamities and pain had made him doubt God's goodness at times (13 : 14, 15; 16 : 9), but in the midst of these doubts moments of faith in the real permanence of God's moral character emerged (13 : 16; 16 : 19). That faith emerges again here at the expense of God's omniscience. Job speaks as though God were ignorant of his real character and as though God would be just, could Job only prove his innocence to him.

7. **Mine heart . . . mine hands** represent respectively inner and outward sins.

8. **Produce.** This is the meaning of the Hebrew and is demanded by the context. The margin may be disregarded.

9. If mine heart have been enticed unto a woman,
And I have laid wait at my neighbour's door:
10. Then let my wife grind unto another,
And let others bow down upon her.
11. For that were an heinous crime;
Yea, it were an iniquity to be punished by the judges:
12. For it is a fire that consumeth unto [1] Destruction,
And would root out all mine increase.
13. If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant,
When they contended with me:
14. What then shall I do when God [2] riseth up?
And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?
15. Did not he that made me in the womb make him?
And [3] did not one fashion us in the womb?

---

[1] m. Heb. *Abaddon*. See 26:6. [2] Gr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *taketh vengeance*. [3] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Targ. Eth. Ar. *were we not fashioned in one womb?*

---

10. **Grind unto another**. Hebrew, "grind for another." The slave-girls who did the grinding were regarded as the most menial, see Ex. 11:5. Foreigners when captured were often put to this work, see Jud. 16:21; Isa. 47:2.

11. **An heinous crime**. Adultery was in Israel a capital offence, see Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22; John 8:5.

12. **Unto destruction**. Read with the margin, "Abaddon." It was the part of Sheol where the wicked were confined; see note on 28:22. For the ruin entailed by adultery, see Pr. 5:8–14; 6:24–35; 7:26, 27.

13. **Despise the cause of my manservant**. A common fault with masters, whether owners or employers. Job had treated his slaves, not as possessions, but as men.

14. **Riseth up**. Read with the versions cited, "taketh vengeance." Job believed with the great prophets that God cared for the poor and oppressed.

15. **One fashion us in the womb**. The Hebrew is peculiar in that it designates God by the numeral "one." We should read

16. If I have withheld [1] the poor from *their* desire,
Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;
17. Or have eaten my morsel alone,
And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;
18. (Nay, from my youth [2] he grew up with me as with a father,
And I have been her guide from my mother's womb;)
19. If I have seen any perish for want of clothing,
Or that the needy had no covering;
20. If his loins have not blessed me,
And if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;
21. If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,

---

[1] m. Or, *aught that the poor desired.*

[2] Vulg. Targ. Ar. *caused me to grow up.*

---

probably with the versions, "were we not fashioned in one womb?" Perhaps Job did not mean to say that the slaves were sons of the same mother, but only to assert by strong hyperbole that he shared their human brotherhood.

16. **The poor . . . the widow.** Eliphaz, 22 : 6, 9, had charged Job with these especial acts of cruelty.

17. **Eaten my morsel alone.** To share one's bread with the hungry was a part of the prophetic ideal of a good man, see Isa. 58 : 7; Eze. 18 : 7, 16.

18. **Grew up with me as with a father.** If Job's charity was limited to those who grew up with him, it was not very meritorious. We should read with the versions cited, "He (*i.e.* God) like a father caused me to grow up." The thought then is that as Job had been cared for by God, so he felt the obligation to care for others. **Have been her guide from my mother's womb.** An impossible assertion. Think of an infant as the guide of a widow! We should, with several scholars, make a slight change in the Hebrew, and read, "And he (God) was my guide from my mother's womb." The thought of the previous line is then well continued.

19. **Needy had no covering.** Again he reverts to the stinging charge of Eliphaz (22 : 6) — all the more stinging because so untrue.

21. **Against the fatherless.** As it seems strange to have another mention of the orphan, some scholars by a slightly different grouping of the Hebrew letters read, "against the blameless."

Because I saw my help in the gate:
22. Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade,
And mine arm be broken from the bone.
23. For [1] calamity from God was a terror to me,
And by reason of his excellency I could do nothing.
24. If I have made gold my hope,
And have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;
25. If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,
And because mine hand had gotten much;
26. If I beheld [2] the sun when it shined,
Or the moon walking in brightness;
27. And my heart hath been secretly enticed,
And [3] my mouth hath kissed my hand:
28. This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judges:
For I should have [4] lied to God that is above.
29. If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the fear of God seized me.* [2] m. Heb. *the light.* [3] m. Heb. *my hand kissed my mouth.* [4] m. Or, *denied God.*

---

23. **Calamity from God was a terror to me.** Read with the versions cited, "the fear of God seized (or restrained) me."

24. **Gold my hope.** Job now begins to deny the sins of the miser or money worshipper.

26. **The sun.** While the Hebrew has "light," it probably means the light of the rising sun. All over the Orient, in the poet's time, the sun was a common object of worship and the splendid light of the rising sun fascinated the imagination. Job here begins a repudiation of idolatry.

27. **Kissed my hand.** Kissing the images of Baal was a part of his worship (1 Kgs. 19:18; Hos. 13:2). In sun-worship, according to Pliny, the hand was, according to the custom mentioned here, kissed to the sun.

28. **Iniquity to be punished by the judges.** Deut. 17:2–7 makes idolatry, including worship of the sun and moon, punishable by death. **Lied to God.** Read with the margin, "denied God."

Or lifted up myself when evil found him;
30. (Yea, I suffered not my [1] mouth to sin
By asking his life with a curse;)
31. If the men of my tent said not,
[2] Who can find one that hath not been satisfied with his flesh?
32. The stranger did not lodge in the street;
But I opened my doors to [3] the traveller;
33. If [4] like Adam I covered my transgressions,
By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom;

---

[1] m. Heb. *palate.*
[2] m. Or, *Oh that we had of his flesh! We cannot be satisfied.*
[3] m. Heb. *the way.*
[4] m. Or, *after the manner of men.*

---

29. **Lifted up myself.** Better, "was triumphant." The poet here touches a very lofty note — one that is decidedly superior to the sentiment of most of the Old Testament including many Psalms; see, for example, the imprecations of Ps. 109: 6–15.

30. **With a curse.** A very unusual degree of self-restraint. Nothing is easier than for an Oriental to curse.

31. **The men of my tent.** Job not only maintained a lofty conception as to his own inward attitude, but inspired this spirit in those about him. **Who can find.** We should translate the whole line as in the margin. It begins with a peculiar Hebrew idiom, and the margin correctly renders it.

32. **The traveller.** This is correct. While the present Hebrew text, as the margin tells us, reads "way," all the more important ancient versions by a slightly different pointing read "traveller." Hospitality was one of the most sacred duties in the Semitic world; the lack of it, one of the greatest sins.

33. **Like Adam.** Most recent commentators read with the margin, "after the manner of men," but "like Adam" is better. Verses 38–40 are clearly a reminiscence of the story of Cain and Abel. These verses probably originally followed v. 34 (see notes on them). It is most natural, therefore, that this verse should refer to Adam's attempt to hide his sin, Gen. 3. It is no sufficient proof of the contrary that Job urges in the next verse the fear of men as a motive for himself, while Adam's motive was the fear of Jehovah. The comparison need not cover more than the one point of concealment from fear.

34. Because I feared the great multitude,
And the contempt of families terrified me,
So that I kept silence, and went not out of the door—
35. Oh that I had one to hear me!
(Lo, here is my [1] signature, let the Almighty answer me;)
And *that I had* the [2] indictment which mine adversary hath written!
36. Surely I would carry it upon my shoulder;
I would bind it unto me as a crown.
37. I would declare unto him the number of my steps;
As a prince would I [3] go near unto him.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *hand*. m. Heb. *mark*. [2] m. Heb. *book*. [3] m. Or, *present it to him*.

---

34. **Because I feared.** Hidden sin makes one fearful. "Conscience doth make cowards of us all."

35. **Oh that I had one to hear me!** This begins Job's final appeal. **Signature.** Whether we read with the text, "signature," with the versions, "hand," or with the margin, "mark," Job means that he sets his hand to the foregoing statement and solemnly vouches for its truth. **Let the Almighty answer me.** He has silenced his friends; he now challenges God. **Indictment.** This is the correct rendering here. The Hebrew word has a much wider signification than the English "book." **Adversary.** A reference to God. Several commentators hesitate to believe this and look for a human adversary, but there can be no doubt that God is intended. Job's consciousness of innocence has made him defiant all along and he is defiant to the end.

36. **As a crown.** Not, as some suppose, because such an accusation would contain nothing against him, but because, although its hideous charges should be commensurate with his sufferings, his conscious innocence would enable him to turn the shame into glory. The approval of his own conscience had made Job independent of the opinions which men held of him; he believed it had made him also independent even of the opinion of God.

37. **As a prince.** Such would be the power of a clean conscience. It is a sublime conception of the independence and noble dignity of the pure in heart. When Job had seen the vision of God, however, he thought differently, cf. 42 : 6. **Go near unto him.** This is preferable to the marginal rendering.

38. If my land cry out against me,
And the furrows thereof weep together;
39. If I have eaten the [1] fruits thereof without money,
Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life:
40. Let [2] thistles grow instead of wheat,
And [3] cockle instead of barley.
The words of Job are ended.

IV. THE ELIHU INTERPOLATIONS, CHS. 32–37

1. *The Prose Introduction to the Elihu Interpolations*, 32 : 1–6

32. So [4] these three men ceased to answer Job, because
2. he was righteous in [5] his own eyes. Then was kindled

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[1] m. Heb. *strength.* [2] m. Or, *thorns.* [3] m. Or, *noisome weeds.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *his three friends.* [5] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. Sym. Syr. Eth. Ar. *in their eyes.*

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38. **If my land cry out against me.** Verses 38–40 are certainly out of place. Such a skilful poet as the author of this book has shown himself certainly did not spoil the splendid climax reached in v. 37 by the addition of these lines. Scholars are agreed that they belong earlier in the chapter, and that an early copyist, having omitted them by accident, appended them here. Opinions differ, however, as to the part of the chapter in which we should place them. The present writer would place them after v. 34. The "crying out" of the "land" strikingly recalls the cry of Abel's blood from the ground, Gen. 4 : 10. Probably, as in v. 34, the poet made Job refer to Adam, so here he drew a parallel with the story of Cain. The two should follow one another here as they do in Genesis.

39. **Caused the owners thereof to lose their life.** Again the phrase is determined by the recollection of the murder of Abel by Cain, Gen. 4 : 8.

40. **Let thistles grow instead of wheat.** This impresses one as a punishment quite inadequate to the crime until the reference to Gen. 3, 4 is recognized. It then appears that this is a quotation from Gen. 3 : 18, and by the suggestions afforded by that ancient passage, a real climax is produced. **The words of Job are ended** is a late editorial gloss.

1. **These three men.** Read with the versions cited, "his three friends"; cf. 2 : 11. **In his own eyes.** This is right; the authorities which read "their eyes" are clearly mistaken.

the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite,
of the family of Ram[1]: against Job was his wrath
kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.
3. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled,
because they had found no answer, and yet had[2] con-
4. demned[3] Job. Now Elihu had[4] waited to speak unto

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. add *of the land of Uz.* [2] Some Gr. MSS. Syr. Hex. *justified.*
[3] Jewish tradition, *God.* [4] m. Heb. *waited for Job with words.*

2. **Elihu.** A new character. The name means "He is my God." The name was borne by four other characters in the Old Testament: Samuel's great-grandfather, 1 Sam. 1:1; a chieftain of Manasseh, 1 Chr. 12:20; a Korahite, 1 Chr. 26:7; and according to 1 Chr. 27:18 (where it is a mistake for Eliab, 1 Sam. 16:6), one of the brethren of David. Elihu may have been the name of the real author of one or both of the additions to the poem which stand under this name, but this genealogy is suspicious, and the name may be an ideal creation. **The son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram.** It seems strange that while the genealogy of Job is unknown, that of Elihu should be so fully given. "Barachel" is a name which occurs nowhere else, though names similarly formed occur in Phœnician and Palmyrene inscriptions. It means "God blesses," and may be an ideal name. The name "Buz" means "despise," though it occurs in Gen. 22:21 as a brother of Uz. It is significant, however, that "Buzite of the family" is in Hebrew almost identical with "contempt of families" in 31:34. "Ram" means "exalted." It occurs elsewhere as a name only in Ruth 4:19; 1 Chr. 2:9 ff., 25 ff.

Probably the words, "Then was the wrath of Elihu of the family of Ram kindled," belonged to the introduction of document B (see Introduction, pp. 27 ff.). The rest of the verse is a late editorial expansion of v. 6a. While the genealogy is ideal, making Elihu a Buzite, he is made to belong to a village near to Uz (Gen. 22:21) and so a man who might naturally be present. The Greek and kindred versions say that he was of "the land of Uz."

His three friends. These words belong to the introduction to the B interpolation. They followed the word "kindled" of v. 2.

3. **Found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.** As the text stands it seems to mean that they had condemned Job with-

5. Job, because they were elder than he. And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was kindled.

6. And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said,

2. *Elihu explains why he had hitherto kept silence, and why he now speaks*, 32:6b–22

I am young, and ye are very old;
Wherefore I held back, and durst not shew you mine opinion.
7. I said, Days should speak,
And multitude of years should teach wisdom.
8. But [1] there is a spirit in man,

---

[1] Sym. *the spirit of God is in man.*

---

out convincing him that they were right. If we read with the versions cited, the meaning is that they "justified" Job by permitting him to talk them down and come off triumphant. If we interpret with the Jewish tradition, the meaning is that they had condemned God by their failure to reply effectively to Job's charges. It is difficult to choose between these alternatives, though the first is based on the best attested reading.

5. **His wrath was kindled.** A statement apparently in anticipation of v. 18 ff.

6. **And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered.** As the text stands this is a needless repetition. The original introduction to interpolation A read:

"So his three friends ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. And Elihu the son of Barachel, the Buzite, answered and said."

6. **Wherefore I held back**, In the Biblical period great deference was paid to the wisdom of age. "Elders" were the rulers of the different cities. Elihu on this account makes a great show of modesty to explain his previous silence, but in the sequel his bashfulness appears to have been lip-modesty.

8. **There is a spirit in man.** Perhaps we should read with Symmachus, "the spirit of God is in man." While Elihu makes the statement general, he claims that God's spirit can give divine

And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding.
9. It is not the [1] great that are wise,
Nor the aged that understand judgement.
10. Therefore I [2] said, Hearken to me;
I also will shew mine opinion.
11. Behold, I waited for your words,
I listened for your reasons,
Whilst ye searched out what to say.
12. Yea, I attended unto you,
And, behold, there was none that convinced Job,
Or that answered his words, among you.
13. [3] Beware lest ye say, We have found wisdom;
God may vanquish him, not man:

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. *elders.* [2] m. Or, *say.* [3] m. Or, *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom; God thrusteth him down, not man: now he &c.*

---

inspiration to the young (v. 9) and that it has given such inspiration to himself (v. 10). This justifies him in speaking in the presence of elders.

9. **The great.** Read with the versions, "the elders."

10. **Therefore.** This word makes vs. 8 and 9 Elihu's reason for speaking, *i.e.* he is qualified by inspiration, therefore, though young, he speaks.

11. **I waited for your words.** These words repeat in different form the idea of v. 6. The words that follow up to v. 17 really treat of a different theme — the unconvincing character of the friends' arguments — leading up in 17b to the same words that we have had in 10b. In v. 18 the thought of v. 10 is resumed and personal reasons are given why Elihu should speak. Probably Dr. Nichols is right, therefore, in regarding these verses as really the introduction to ch. 34. When they are omitted from ch. 32, the argument of Elihu becomes much more consistent.

13. **Lest ye say.** The reading of the text for the whole verse is to be preferred to that of the margin. **We have found wisdom.** That is, in Job. The friends might excuse themselves that they had discovered a wisdom to which their arguments were not equal. **God may vanquish him, not man.** These words are a direct polemic against the poet for bringing God into the dialogue.

14. For he hath not directed his words against me;
Neither will I answer him with your speeches.
15. They are amazed, they answer no more:
They have not a word to say.
16. And shall I wait, because they speak not,
Because they stand still, and answer no more?
17. [1] I also will answer my part,
I also will shew mine opinion.
18. For I am full of words;
The spirit [2] within me constraineth me.

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. have for this line *And Elihu answered and said.* [2] m. Heb. *of my belly.*

This interpolator thinks men should have been made to convince Job.

14. **Not directed his words against me.** That is, he had not yet debated with Elihu. **Neither will I answer him with your speeches.** The interpolator promises to use better arguments than the friends had. In reality the same old ideas are repeated.

15. **They are amazed.** The friends are referred to in the third person to make it more contemptuous. Compare Isa. 22: 16b.

16. **Wait, because they speak not.** Because three men have been worsted is no reason why another should not attempt the task.

17. **I also will answer my part.** These words are probably an attempt to make poetry out of "And Elihu answered and said," which is still found in the versions quoted above. We should restore the original reading and place this after v. 5 and before v. 11. This interpolator's statement read, we suppose, in part as follows:

(v. 5) "And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was kindled. (v. 17) And Elihu answered and said:

(v. 11) "Behold I waited for your words,
I listened for your reasons."

I also will shew mine opinion. This line is identical with v. 10b. It was repeated when the two interpolations were woven together, and should be stricken out.

19. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent;
Like new [1] bottles [2] it is ready to burst.
20. I will speak, that I may [3] be refreshed;
I will open my lips and answer.
21. Let me not, I pray you, respect any man's person;
Neither will I give flattering titles unto any man.
22. For I know not to give flattering titles;
Else would my Maker soon take me away.

3. *Elihu seeks to show Job his Error*, Ch. 33

33. Howbeit, Job, I pray thee, hear my speech,
And hearken to all my words.
2. Behold now, I have opened my mouth,

---

[1] m. Or, *wine skins.* [2] m. Or, *which are ready.* [3] m. Or, *find relief.*

---

18. **The spirit within me.** This verse connects directly with v. 10, continuing the thought of vs. 6–10. The "spirit" is the Divine Spirit, the inspiration of which Elihu had claimed in v. 8.

19. **Bottles.** The marginal "wine skins" gives us the fact. Compare RV of Matt. 9 : 17; Mk. 2 : 22; Luke. 5 : 37. Such skins are largely used in Palestine instead of bottles at the present time.

20. **Be refreshed.** The margin, "find relief," is better. The figure is still that of fermenting wine.

21. **Give flattering titles.** The speaker promises to be sincere and fearless. He will discuss the problem solely on its merits.

22. **Else would my Maker.** Fear of God preserves him, he believes, from fawning on men.

(1) *He invites Job to hear him, since he is a man and not terrifying God;* 33 : 1–7

1. **Job . . . hear my speech.** Having made a suitable introduction of himself, interpolator A now addresses himself to Job. He makes Elihu the only character in the book who frequently calls Job by name. In the main part of the poem the friends do not do this, while interpolator B makes Elihu address himself not to Job, but to the friends.

2. **I have opened my mouth.** It is incredible that the genius who wrote the main poem should have devoted a verse to this trivial statement and thought it poetry! Interpolator A belonged to that prosaic class of good souls whose chief claim to distinction is orthodox piety, rather than poetic gifts.

My tongue hath spoken in my[1] mouth.
3. My words *shall utter* the uprightness of my heart:
And that which my lips know they shall speak sincerely.
4. The spirit of God [2] hath made me,
And the breath of the Almighty [3] giveth me life.
5. If thou canst, answer thou me;
Set *thy words* in order before me, stand forth.
6. Behold,[4] I am toward God even as thou art:
I also am formed out of the clay.
7. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid,
Neither shall [5] my pressure be heavy upon thee.

---

[1] m. Heb. *palate*. [2] Syr. Ar. *arouses me*. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *instructs me*.
[4] m. Or, *I am according to thy wish in God's stead*. [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *my hand*.

3. **My words shall utter the uprightness of my heart.** Literally, "My words are the uprightness of my heart"—an awkward expression. Perhaps as Duhm has suggested we should change a single letter and read, "My heart impels my words."

4. **Hath made me.** As Peake has seen, this verse should follow v. 6, where it makes good sense. Its accidental transposition to its present position probably gave rise to the readings of the versions.

5. **If thou canst, answer.** This should follow immediately after v. 3.

6. **I am toward God even as thou art.** This is correct. Elihu is assuring Job that he is a man, and not One whose splendor and power will unman him. The margin is incorrect, for Job had not asked for a human being or even for an angel in God's place, but for God himself; see 31 : 35. Verse 4 should follow this verse, to impress its meaning.

7. **My terror shall not make thee afraid.** Job had twice complained that God's terror overwhelmed and unmanned him (9 : 34; 13 : 21). Elihu assures Job that he, a mere man, comes with no such terrors, that Job can listen to him collectedly. **My pressure.** Read with the versions cited, "my hand." Job had also complained in 19 : 21 that the hand of God had smitten him.

8. Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing,
And I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *saying*,
9. I am clean, without transgression;
I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me:
10. Behold, he findeth [1] occasions against me,
He counteth me for his enemy;
11. He putteth my feet in the stocks,
He marketh all my paths.
12. [2] Behold, I will answer thee, in this thou art not just;

---

[1] m. *causes of alienation.*

[2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *How dost thou say I am just, but he does not answer me.* m. Or, *Behold in this thou art not just; I will answer thee: for &c.*

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(2) *Elihu restates Job's position*, 33 : 8–13

8. **Thou hast spoken in mine hearing.** After this long, boastful introduction, in which the modest Elihu makes himself out so much wiser than his elders and claims to have special information given him by God on these matters, he finally comes to the matter in hand. In order to introduce it, he represents himself again as a listener to the whole debate.

9. **Clean, without transgression.** This does Job injustice, for he had admitted transgressions (7 : 21; 13 : 26). Nevertheless Job had asserted his integrity with so much more emphasis (9 : 21; 10 : 7; 13 : 18; 16 : 17; 23 : 7, 10–12; 27 : 4–6; and ch. 31), that Elihu's sweeping statement is pardonable.

10. **Occasions.** The margin, "causes of alienation" gives the meaning. **He counteth me for his enemy.** Quoted from 13 : 24.

11. **He putteth my feet in the stocks.** The verse is quoted from 13 : 27.

12. **Behold, I will answer thee**, etc. The versions quoted had a different text, and one that continued the quotations from Job. They are in the main to be followed, though one or two of their mistakes should be corrected. They have probably, as has been noted by others, mistaken the Hebrew word for "cry" for the word for "righteous," the two being much alike. They have also in the second line, as Duhm perceived, mistaken the word "hide" for "eternal," the two being from the same stem. If we make these corrections, the verse reads:

> "How dost thou say: I cry and he answers not,
> God hides himself from men?"

[1] For God is greater than man.
13. [2] Why dost thou strive against him?
For he giveth not account of any of his matters.
14. For God speaketh [3] once,
Yea twice, *though man* regardeth it not.
15. In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falleth upon men,
In slumberings upon the bed;
16. Then he [4] openeth the ears of men,

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *For he is eternal above mortals.* [2] m. Or, *Why dost thou strive against him, for that he . . . matters?* [3] m. Or, *in one way, yea, in two.* [4] m. Heb. *uncovereth.*

The first line quotes 9 : 16; 19 : 7; 30 : 20; the second, 13 : 24; 23 : 8, 9; 26 : 14.

13. **He giveth not account of any of his matters.** This translation makes the meaning, "Why strive to obtain an answer from one who never replies concerning such matters," and implies that the struggle is useless. This is, however, in contradiction with vs. 14 ff., where Elihu tells how God replies. The marginal rendering means, "Why complain that God does not explain his dealings with thee?" In reality both translations of the line are wrong. The Hebrew rendered "matters" really means "words," and, as other scholars have seen, the possessive pronoun should be corrected to "thy." The verse then reads:

"Why dost thou strive against him?
Because he does not answer thy words?"

(3) *God seeks by night visions and by chastisements to redeem men*, 33 : 14–30

14. **Once, yea twice.** Elihu now turns to tell Job that God does answer and to imply that God has answered him, though Job has missed it through heedlessness. Instead of "once, yea twice," we should read with the margin, "in one way, yea, in two." These ways are the two which are described in the following verses, dreams and chastisements. **Though man regardeth it not.** As Ley has suggested, we should read, "if man regardeth it not." If men heed dreams, God does not send the more severe answer, chastisements, is Elihu's reasoning.

15. **In a dream.** The description is based upon that of Eliphaz in 4 : 12 ff., the second line being a quotation from 4 : 13.

And [1] sealeth [2] their instruction,
17. [3] That he may withdraw man [4] *from his* purpose
And [5] hide [6] pride from man;
18. [7] He keepeth back his soul from the pit,
And his life from perishing [8] by the [9] sword.
19. [10] He is chastened also with pain upon his bed,
[11] And with continual strife in his bones:

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Aq. Sah. Eth. *terrifies them.* Syr. Ar. *humbles them.* Vulg. *instructs them.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *with visions.* Aq. Vulg. *with correction.* [3] m. Or, *That man may put away* his *purpose and that he may hide.* [4] Gr. OLat. Syr. Targ. Sah. Eth. Ar. *from wickedness.* [5] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *deliver from ruin.* [6] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *his body.* [7] m. Or, *That he may keep back.* [8] Syr. *from Abaddon.* [9] m. Or, *weapons.* [10] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Or again he chastens him.* [11] Theod. *And the fulness of his bones he restrains.* Syr. Ar. *And the multitude of his bones are broken.* Vulg. *And he makes all his bones to rot.* m. Another reading [Targ.] is, *While all his bones are firm.*

---

16. **Sealeth their instruction.** The Hebrew gives the thought as well as any of the versions cited.

17. **From his purpose.** Read with the versions, "from wickedness." **And hide pride from man.** Again read with the versions, "And save his body from destruction." The text as it stands is clearly wrong. Some scholars seek to improve it by changing the verb "hide" to "destroy" or "cut off," but the reading of the versions is better, as it makes a progress of thought from "wickedness" (17a) to "destruction of the body" (17b) and the going of the soul to Sheol (18).

18. **He keepeth back.** Read with the margin, "That he may keep back." **By the sword.** This gives no satisfactory meaning. The Syriac reading "from Abaddon" points in the right direction. "In Sheol" was, perhaps, the real reading, as in Hebrew, it would not differ greatly from "by the sword" and might easily have been corrupted into it.

19. **He is chastened.** We should read with the versions, "Or he is chastened." Elihu has completed his description of one class of God's warnings, visions, and now turns to the second class, chastisements. The Hebrew text as it stands has lost the transition. **And with continual strife in his bones.** This is an unintelligible statement. The great variety of readings in the versions (cited above) shows that the text is corrupt. Probably we cannot do better than to read with the Vulgate, "Makes all his bones to rot," cf. 13 : 28.

20. So that his life abhorreth bread,
And his soul dainty meat.
21. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen;
And his bones that were not seen stick out.
22. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the pit,
And his life [1] to the destroyers.
23. If there be with him [2] an angel,
An interpreter, one [3] among a thousand,
To shew unto man [4] what is right for him;

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Ar. Eth. *to the dead.*
[2] m. Or, *a messenger.*
[3] m. Or, *of the thousand.*
[4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *his fault.* m. Or, *his uprightness.*

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20. **His life.** Stands here for his whole personality. It is a strong expression for his "appetite."

21. **That it cannot be seen.** The hyperbole is too strong. In the greatest illness this does not happen. Several commentators have seen that the change of a single letter in the Hebrew would make the line:

"His flesh is consumed away by leanness."

22. **To the destroyers.** By simply spacing the Hebrew letters differently, we should read with the versions, "to the dead."

23. **An angel.** Most interpreters make this a supernatural being, but this is unnecessary. As the margin shows, the word means simply "messenger" (cf. Mal. 3:1). A human messenger is, perhaps, better for the mission which Elihu is describing than an angel. Elihu is here depicting the rôle which he himself is playing. By a "messenger" he means himself. **One among a thousand.** The text here is better than the marginal rendering. Such a "messenger" must be a picked man, inspired by God, as Elihu claimed to be (32:8, 9, 18). Not every one was equal to the task. The remark is a reflection on the friends; they had assayed the task and failed. **To shew unto man.** This messenger is to be an interpreter to the sufferer of his present painful experience. **What is right for him.** If we retain the text as it stands, we must read with the margin "his uprightness" and understand the "his" to refer to God. That gives an intelligible meaning. Job had failed to understand God's justice in his case, and Elihu sets himself to explain it to him. Perhaps, however, on the basis of the versions cited, we

24. [1] Then he is gracious unto him, and saith,
Deliver him from going down to the pit,
I have found a ransom.
25. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's;
He returneth to the days of his youth:
26. He prayeth unto God, and he is favourable unto him;
So that he seeth his face with joy:
And he restoreth unto man his righteousness.
27. [2] He singeth before men, and saith,
I have sinned, and perverted that which was right,
And [3] it profited me not:
28. He hath redeemed my soul from going into the pit,
And my life shall behold the light.
29. Lo, all these things doth God work,

---

[1] m. Or, *And he is gracious . . . and, say . . . ransom: his flesh &c.* [2] m. Or, *He looketh upon men.* [3] m. Or, *it was not requited unto me*, or, *it was not meet for me.*

---

should read, "To interpret unto man his chastisement." The meaning would then be that Elihu undertakes to make Job understand why he has suffered.

24. **Then he is gracious.** That is, when man once comprehends the true situation. It is taken for granted that then he will repent. The rendering of the text is preferable to that of the margin. **Ransom.** We should probably add "for his life."

25. **Be fresher.** The Hebrew word thus rendered occurs nowhere else and is certainly a corruption. We should probably read, "His flesh becomes abundant as a boy's." This is said in contrast to the emaciation depicted in v. 21.

26. **He is favourable unto him.** This verse depicts his religious rehabilitation as v. 25 his physical rehabilitation.

27. **He singeth before men.** This is much to be preferred to the marginal reading. Probably the meaning is that he joins in the singing of the synagogue or the temple; cf. Ps. 42:4. **Profited me not.** Read with the first margin, "It was not requited unto me." The penitent rejoices because he was forgiven instead of being punished.

28. **Behold the light.** The light of the upper world in contrast to the darkness of the "pit" of Sheol.

Twice, *yea* thrice, with a man,
30. To bring back his soul from the pit,
That he may be enlightened with the light of[1] the living.
31. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me:
Hold thy peace, and I will speak.
32. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me:
Speak, for I desire to justify thee.
33. If not, hearken thou unto me:
Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.

4. *Elihu appeals from Job to the Wise*, Ch. 34

34. Moreover Elihu answered and said,
2. Hear my words, ye wise men;

---

[1] m. Or, *life*.

---

29. **Twice, yea thrice.** In his mercy God gives more than one opportunity.

30. **The living.** Read with the margin, "life." Elihu's first argument as given by interpolator A ends here. The verses which follow are the introduction to the second argument, which is continued in ch. 35.

(4) *Elihu adjures Job to listen further*, 33 : 31–33

31. **Mark well, O Job.** These words begin the second discourse of Elihu as given by interpolator A. In vs. 31–33 he is inviting Job's attention. **Hold thy peace.** In the light of the following verse we should understand this to mean, "If thou holdest thy peace, I will continue speaking."

32. **If thou hast any thing to say, answer me.** The interpolator makes Elihu assume the appearance of fairness to Job by giving him an opportunity to reply.

33. **If not, hearken.** By this device the writer produces the impression that Job found Elihu's argument unanswerable! As noted above, the discourse to which this is an introduction now stands in ch. 35.

(1) *He invites their attention to Job's position*, 34 : 1–9

1. **Moreover Elihu answered and said.** This verse is a late editorial addition similar to 27 : 1; 29 : 1; 35 : 1, etc.

2. **Hear my words.** With this verse we come again to the

And give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.
3. For the ear trieth words,
As the palate tasteth meat.
4. Let us choose for us that which is right:
Let us know among ourselves what is good.
5. For Job hath said, I am righteous,
And God hath taken away my right:
6. [1] Notwithstanding my right I am *accounted* a liar;
[2] My wound is incurable, *though I am* without transgression.
7. What man is like Job,
Who drinketh up scorning like water?
8. Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity,

---

[1] m. Or, *Should I lie against my right* [2] m. Heb. *Mine arrow.*

---

work of interpolator B. The introduction to this section is probably, as we have seen, in 32:17a, 11–16. In those verses the writer had made Elihu address the friends and tell them how inadequate their answers to Job had been. In this section he begins to combat Job's argument. **Ye wise men.** In form this is an address to the friends, but by choosing the term "wise men," the writer really makes an appeal to all intelligent readers of the poem. He wishes to appeal to their good judgment to condemn the blasphemous sentiments to which Job has given utterance.

3. **The ear trieth words.** The verse is borrowed from 12:11. See note there.

4. **Choose . . . that which is right.** Compare Luke 12:57.

5. **Job hath said, I am righteous.** Compare 13:18; 27:2.

6. **I am accounted a liar.** The rendering of the text is to be preferred to that of the margin. It was in substance one of Job's grievances that, though innocent, God accounted him as guilty, thus in substance counting him a liar. This interpolator makes Job complain that God unjustly wounded him when innocent. According to interpolator A (33:10–12) Job's complaint was that after afflicting Job God would not hear his cry. The writer B has perceived the fundamental difficulty better than the writer A.

7. **Scorning.** Here almost equal to "blasphemy." Cf. Ps. 1:1. Elihu is expressing his abhorrence of Job's utterances. **Like water.** Cf. 15:16. Everything in Palestine drinks water with avidity.

And walketh with wicked men.
9. For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing
That he should [1] delight himself with God.
10. Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding:
Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness;
And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.
11. For the work of a man shall he render unto him,
And cause every man to find according to his ways.
12. Yea, of a surety, God will not do wickedly,
Neither will the Almighty pervert judgement.
13. Who gave him a charge over the earth?
Or who hath [2] disposed the whole world?
14. [3] If he [4] set his [5] heart [6] upon [7] man,

---

[1] m. Or, *consent with*. See Ps. 50:18. [2] m. Or, *laid* upon him. [3] m. According to another reading, *If he cause his heart to return unto himself*. [4] 5 Heb. MSS. Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *cause to return*. [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *heart*. [6] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *unto himself*. m. Or, *upon himself*. [7] m. Heb. *him*.

---

8. **Walketh with wicked men.** There is no evidence in the story that Job actually "walked with the wicked." This is Elihu's inference from Job's words. Such sentiments placed Job, he thought, among wicked men.

9. **It profiteth a man nothing.** Job's words in 21:15 are almost literally quoted, but cf. also 9:22 and 21:17. On the difficulty of the moral problem of the prosperity of the wicked cf. Ps. 37, 49, 73.

(2) *Elihu asserts that God can do no wrong*, 34:10–15

10. **God . . . do wickedness.** A restatement of Bildad's assertion in 8:3.

11. **Work of a man . . . render unto him.** The evil really originates with the man, says Elihu.

13. **Disposed.** Read with the margin, "laid upon him." Elihu in this rhetorical way asserts that God is supreme. No one has given him his great task and he is accountable to no one.

14. **If he set his heart upon man.** The idea conveyed by

If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;
15. All flesh shall perish together,
And man shall turn again unto dust.
16. [1] If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this:
Hearken to the voice of my words.
17. Shall even one that hateth right govern?
And wilt thou condemn him that is just *and* mighty?
18. [2] Is it *fit* to say to a king, *Thou art* vile?

---

[1] Gr. Aq. Sym. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. Ar. *If thou understandest.* m. Or, *Only understand.* [2] m. Or, read by some ancient versions [Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar.], *Who saith to . . . vile,* and *to . . . wicked; that respecteth &c.*

---

this line is obscure, and the variations of the versions show that the text is corrupt. Probably we should omit the word "heart" and connect "spirit" with the first half of the verse. The whole then reads:

"If he cause to return to himself his spirit,
And gather to himself his breath."

The conclusion of the condition is in the next verse. The passage is a reminiscence of Gen. 2 : 7.

15. **All flesh shall perish together.** This is the conclusion to the condition in the previous line. The philosophy underlying the whole passage is that man has no right to criticise God, since he is dependent upon God for his very breath.

(3) *Injustice does not become earthly rulers, much less God,* 34 : 16–27

16. **If now thou hast understanding.** We should read with the versions, "If thou understandest." The verse is probably an editorial gloss added after the combination of the work of the two interpolators, for it is addressed to Job, whereas the rest of the chapter is addressed to the friends or wise men.

17. **One that hateth right govern.** Elihu curiously begs the question. His argument is, in substance, that because one rules he must be just. God is the almighty Ruler, therefore he cannot do wrong. **Wilt thou condemn.** The peculiar text of the Greek versions suggests that originally the line may have read, "Shall he that is just and mighty do wrong?"

18. **Is it fit to say to a king.** According to the text the meaning is, "No one calls an earthly ruler vile to his face, how much less should one call God vile?" The meaning according to the

Or to nobles, *Ye are* wicked?
19. *How much less to* him that respecteth not the persons of princes,
Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?
For they all are the work of his hands.
20. In a moment they die, [1] even at midnight;
The people are shaken and pass away,
And the mighty are taken away without hand.
21. For his eyes are upon [2] the ways of a man,
And he seeth all his goings.
22. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death,
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
23. For he needeth not further to consider a man,
That he should go before God in judgement.

---

[1] m. Or, *and at midnight the people &c.*

[2] Gr. Eth. *the works.*

versions which the margin follows is, "God, the just and mighty, is the one who calls earthly rulers vile." The inference is that he calls them this because he is more just than they and has the right to do so.

19. **Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor.** He is so far above all, that human inequalities are as nothing before him. The words continue the thought of the preceding verse, whichever alternative of the interpretation of that verse we choose.

20. **In a moment they die.** God who stands so far above princes is eternal, but they perish. **The people.** Several scholars think we should read here "the rich." It would fit the context better.

21. **His eyes are upon the ways.** This statement and those following in vs. 22, 23 are intended to show that the judgments of God are right since they are guided by complete knowledge.

23. **He needeth not further to consider a man.** The Hebrew thus translated is very unusual. Several scholars have suggested that we should by a slight change read:

"For he appointeth no set time for a man,
That he should go before God in judgment."

24. He breaketh in pieces mighty men [1] *in ways* past finding out,
And setteth others in their stead.
25. Therefore he taketh knowledge of their works;
And he overturneth them in the night, so that they are [2] destroyed.
26. He striketh them as wicked men
[3] In the open sight of others;
27. Because they turned aside from following him,
And would not have regard to any of his ways:
28. [4] So that they caused the cry of the poor to come unto him,
And he heard the cry of the afflicted.

---

[1] m. Or, *without inquisition.* [2] m. Heb. *crushed.* [3] m. Heb. *In the place of beholders.* [4] m. Or, *That they might cause . . . and that he might hear.*

---

24. **In ways past finding out.** The margin "without inquisition" is to be preferred. The meaning is that God's knowledge is so infallible that he breaks in pieces the mighty without having to give them a trial, to ascertain their guilt.

25. **Taketh knowledge of their works.** This verse is a weak repetition of vs. 20, 21. It interrupts the connection where it stands and is probably a later gloss.

26. **He striketh them as wicked men.** The Hebrew text at this point has been somewhat dislocated by the insertion of v. 25, and this translation is hardly defensible. Many recent interpreters recognize that the phrase "they are crushed" at the end of v. 25 is a genuine part of v. 26 and completes its metre. The omission of a single letter, then, gives us this reading for the verse:

> "They are crushed beneath their wickedness,
> He strikes them in the place of beholders."

This connects admirably with v. 24. **In the open sight of others.** Read with the margin "In the place of beholders."

(4) *An interpolation — a fragment of a poem on kings,* 34 : 28–33

28. **Caused the cry of the poor to come unto him.** This introduces a new thought, and one inconsistent with the argument of most of the chapter. Internal and external evidence alike unite to show that vs. 28–33 are an interpolation. They were omitted

29. [1] When he giveth quietness, who then can condemn?
And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?
Whether *it be done* unto a nation, or unto a man, alike:
30. That the godless man reign not,
That there be none to ensnare the people.
31. [2] For hath any said unto God,

---

[1] 1 Heb. MS. Syr. Ar. *When he is quiet.*

[2] Theod. Syr. Targ. Eth. Ar. *For he who says.* Vulg. *Because, then, I speak.*

---

from the Greek version till the time of Origen and are still omitted from the Sahidic version. They introduce, too, the thought of national oppression from a great king, probably either Persian or Greek, a subject foreign to the Book of Job. The thought is resumed in a few verses in ch. 36, which are omitted by the same versions, and are, like these verses, fragments of a poem on kings. For a reconstruction of the poem, see note on 36 : 13. Elsewhere the Book of Job and even the Elihu speeches deal with the sins, the righteousness, and the fate of individuals alone. Probably the interpolation was introduced at some time of national oppression. It is particularly inept to the context here, where it comes in between Elihu's description of the way that God destroys the powerful, and his conclusion that wise men must consider Job a sinner.

29. **When he giveth quietness.** Read with the authorities cited, "When he is quiet." The thought is that when the far-off autocrat chooses to be quiet, no one can disturb him, however urgent may be the cause which one desires to bring before him. **Whether it be done unto a nation, or unto a man, alike.** Translate rather, "Whether concerning a nation or a man, it is the same." The line connects directly with the preceding. One cannot obtain access to a king, if the king wishes to be quiet; it makes no difference whether one has the cause of a nation or an individual to plead.

30. **That the godless man reign not.** This continues the thought of v. 29. The man who wished to gain an audience with the supreme autocrat might wish to make request concerning his nation that the godless (or ruthless?) satrap or petty king who was ruling them should be removed. **That there be none to ensnare.** Translate, "That he should not ensnare." The phrase continues the thought of the preceding line.

31. **For hath any said unto God.** The versions quoted above

I have borne *chastisement*, [1] I will not offend *any more:*
32. [2] That which I see not teach thou me:
If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more?
33. Shall his recompence be as thou wilt, that thou refusest it?
For thou must choose, and not I:
Therefore speak what thou knowest.
34. Men of understanding will say unto me,
Yea, every wise man that heareth me:

---

[1] m. Or, *though I offend not.*

[2] Vulg. *If I have sinned.*

---

show that the text is difficult and corrupt, though none of them offers a satisfactory meaning. Perhaps with some modern scholars we should read:

"But say unto God, I endure,
I will not again commit sin."

This is advice to the man who cannot get at the autocrat to obtain redress. He is advised to regard his suffering as chastisement for sin, to endure it, and to resolve upon reformation.

32. **That which I see not.** Read with the Vulgate, "If I have sinned." The verse continues the address which the disappointed suppliant of the king is advised to direct to God.

33. **Shall his recompence be as thou wilt?** The Hebrew will not really bear this translation. All recent interpreters agree that the text of the verse is corrupt. Probably we should change one letter of the original and read, "According to thy wish shall he recompense him?" **That thou refusest it.** Translate rather, "But thou refusest it?" **And not I.** Read with some recent commentators, "not God." The whole verse should, perhaps, run:

"Shall he recompense him according to thy wish?
But thou refusest it?
Then shouldst thou choose, not God?
What thou knowest, speak."

Like the preceding verses it is addressed to the rebellious subject, who cannot obtain from his sovereign a hearing for his cause.

(5) *Wise men must condemn Job as rebellious*, 34:34–37

34. **Every wise man.** This verse resumes the address of Elihu according to interpolator B. Between it and v. 27, 35:15,

35. Job speaketh without knowledge,
And his words are without wisdom.
36. [1] Would that Job were tried unto the end,
[2] Because of his answering like wicked men.
37. For he addeth rebellion unto his sin,
He clappeth his hands among us,
And multiplieth his words against God.

5. *Elihu's Second Address to Job*, Ch. 35

35. Moreover Elihu answered and said,
2. Thinkest thou this to be *thy* right,

---

[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *But truly Job hath been instructed.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *That we should not add to our sins.*

---

16 originally stood. See notes on those verses. Elihu thinks he has made out so strong a case that every intelligent person must concur in the conclusion which he is about to state.

35. **Speaketh without knowledge.** Job has been blasphemous because of his folly, or his lack of insight.

36. **Would that Job were tried unto the end.** This indicates a vindictive spirit on Elihu's part and is in itself hardly intelligible. We gain a clearer thought and one more in harmony with v. 37, if we read on the basis of the versions quoted:

> "But truly Job has been made an example,
> That we might not add to our sins."

37. **Addeth rebellion.** This was the point in which Elihu, according to interpolator B, thought that wise men would gain instruction from Job's case (see note on v. 36); Job had rebelled and spoken bitterly — had added blasphemy to his original transgressions. Wise men would be deterred from such impiety, and take God's corrections reverently.

(1) *God is impassible; Job's sins cannot harm, nor his righteousness profit God*, 35:1–8

1. **Moreover Elihu answered and said.** The Hebrew is simply, "And Elihu answered and said." Like 27:1; 29:1; and 34:1 the verse is a late editorial addition and should be stricken out. It interrupts the thought.

2. **Thy right.** The word "thy" is not in the Hebrew and

Or sayest thou, [1] My righteousness is more than God's,
3. That thou sayest, What advantage will it be unto thee?
And, What profit shall I have, more than if I had sinned?
4. I will answer thee,
And thy [2] companions with thee.
5. Look unto the heavens, and see;
And behold the skies, which are higher than thou,

---

[1] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. Ar. *I am more righteous.*

[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *three friends.*

---

should be omitted. **My righteousness is more than God's.** Read with the versions, "I am more righteous than God." If our analysis is correct, this verse resumes the work of interpolator A and connects directly with 33:33. Ch. 33:31–33 formed the introduction to a second address of Elihu to Job, and this verse (35:2) begins that address. In his first address to Job Elihu had recounted Job's assertions of innocence and of God's unjust treatment of him (33:9–12). Here Elihu claims that that is in reality claiming a greater righteousness than God's on the ground that to criticise the morality of the act of another is to assert the possession of greater moral insight than that other.

3. **Advantage . . . unto thee.** As others have noted, we should read, "What advantage will it be unto me?" The next line shows that this is the thought. **Profit . . . more than if I had sinned?** Such a question in Elihu's mind logically followed from Job's utterances. If rewards for righteousness consist of worldly prosperity, and if God punishes the righteous with worldly disaster, there seems to be no advantage in righteousness.

4. **Companions.** The Hebrew word is the same as that translated "friends" in 2:11 ff. Some have supposed that it cannot refer to the "three friends," because Elihu's argument is much the same as theirs. Such scholars understand the words to refer to people of Job's way of thinking. An interpolator would, however, be likely to condemn the whole book and all the characters in it, and it is quite in accord with ancient literary methods to do this, even while borrowing from the speeches of the friends. The versions quoted above clearly took it to refer to the "friends" who appear throughout the book.

5. **Higher than thou.** An echo of 11:7–9 and 22:12.

6. If thou hast sinned, what doest thou against him?
And if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?
7. If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?
Or what receiveth he of thine hand?
8. Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou art;
And thy righteousness *may profit* a son of man.
9. By reason of the multitude of [1] oppressions they cry out;
They cry for help by reason of the arm of the mighty.
10. But [2] none saith, Where is God [3] my Maker,
Who giveth songs in the night;
11. Who [4] teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth,

---

[1] 1 Heb. MS. Sym. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *oppressors.* [2] Syr. Ar. *they do not say.* [3] Syr. Ar. *our.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *separates us.*

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6. **What doest thou against him?** Vs. 6–8 borrow the thought of Eliphaz in 22:2, 3. Job had first suggested the thought in 7:20.

8. **A man as thou art.** Elihu denies that we can properly reason from man to God, at least in so far as the problem under consideration is concerned.

(2) *Men, when oppressed, do not cry unto God in the right way: they cry from pride, not for comfort,* 35:9–12

9. **Oppressions.** Read with the authorities cited, "oppressors." **Cry for help.** The connection of this section with the preceding is not very close, but Elihu seems to be taking up the point that might naturally be raised against him, "If God's rule is righteous, why does the cry of the oppressed continually go up from earth?"

10. **None saith.** Read with the versions cited, "They do not say." **My Maker.** Read with the versions, "our Maker." **Who giveth songs in the night.** If they sought for this religious comfort, Elihu implies that they would obtain it.

11. **Teacheth us more than the beasts of the field.** He gives us more knowledge than he gives them. This in Elihu's view

And maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?
12. There they cry, [1] but none giveth answer,
Because of the pride of evil men.
13. Surely God will not hear vanity,
Neither will the Almighty regard it.
14. How much less when thou sayest [2] thou beholdest him not,
The cause is before him, and [3] thou waitest for him!
15. But now, because he hath not visited in his anger,

---

[1] m. Or, *but he answereth not.* [2] m. Or, *thou beholdest him not! The cause is before him; therefore wait thou for him.* [3] Syr. Ar. *supplicate thou him.* Theod. Sym. Sah. Targ. Eth. *is not visiting.*

---

should be a cause for thankfulness. The author of Job had claimed in 12 : 7, 8 that animals could teach men.

12. **But none giveth answer.** Read with the margin, "He does not answer," *i.e.* God doth not answer. **Because of the pride of evil men.** This is frequently taken to mean that the poor cry because of the pride of evil men. On this interpretation the line repeats the thought of v. 9 and is pointless. On this view Elihu says they cry on account of oppressions, but God does not answer because their cry is on account of oppressions. A much clearer thought is obtained if we translate, by dropping a single letter, "Because of the pride of their evil" — a Hebrew idiom for "their evil pride." This makes Elihu give as the intelligible reason why God is silent, that they do not ask for real religious comfort, but because of the pride of their own evil hearts.

(3) *God heeds not such cries, therefore Job rages*, 35 : 13–16

13. **Vanity.** The cry of pride is said to be vanity; therefore God hears it not.

14. **Less when thou sayest thou beholdest him not.** The text is here preferable to the rendering of the margin. The meaning is, If God will not answer the cry of vanity, how much less will he answer the cry of thy impatient blindness. **Thou waitest.** With the versions cited we should take the verb as an imperative, rendering, "Wait thou for him." Elihu urges Job not to be impatient. His cause is before God; Job should await God's answer.

15. **Because he hath not visited.** Read with the versions

[1] Neither doth he greatly regard [2] arrogance;
16. Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vanity;
He [3] multiplieth words without knowledge.

6. *Elihu's Third Address to Job*, Chs. 36, 37

36. Elihu also proceeded, and said,
2. [4] Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee;
For [5] I have yet somewhat to say on [6] God's behalf.

---

[1] m. Or, Thou sayest, *He doth not greatly regard arrogance. Thus doth &c.* [2] Theod. Sym. Vulg. Eth. *transgression.* [3] Theod. Sym. Eth. *makes heavy.* [4] m. Heb. *Wait for.* [5] m. there are *yet words for God.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *speech is yet in me.*

---

cited, "He is not visiting." Even on this reading Elihu is not quite true to facts. In reality the verse belongs after 34:27, where the reference is to the wicked in general, not to Job in particular, and there the words are true. **Neither doth he greatly regard.** It is better not to supply "Thou sayest" as the margin does. The words are not in the Hebrew. **Arrogance.** Read with the versions cited above, "transgressions."

16. **Therefore.** Connects this verse closely with v. 15. **Doth Job open his mouth.** Job is here spoken of in the third person as in ch. 34. The exhortation to Elihu had reached its climax and logical conclusion in v. 14. Vs. 15, 16 probably belong in ch. 34 after v. 27 and before v. 34. They were probably displaced at that point by the later interpolation of 34:28–33.

(1) *God is mighty, but despises none*, 36:1–12 [genuine parts]

1. **Elihu also proceeded and said.** These words, like 27:1; 29:1; 34:1; 35:1 are an editorial addition which interrupt the thought. In estimating the true character of the Elihu discourses they should be disregarded.

2. **Suffer me a little.** These words connect directly with 35:14. Having finished the treatment of one phase of his thought with an exhortation, Elihu passes to his third address by a gentle transition. **Yet somewhat to say on God's behalf.** The margin, "Yet words for God," gives the literal rendering, but the text gives the thought. This statement fits well what follows, and is to be preferred to the reading of the Greek and kindred versions, which would simply mean, "I have more to say."

3. I will fetch my knowledge from afar,
And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4. For truly my words are not false:
One that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.
5. Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any:
He is mighty in strength of [1] understanding.
6. [2] He preserveth not the life of the wicked:
[3] But giveth to the afflicted *their* right.
7. [4] He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous:

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[1] m. Heb. *heart.*
[2] Gr. Sah. place this line after v. 10a.
[3] Gr. Sah. read this line as a part of v. 15.
[4] Gr. Sah. read this line just before v. 18.

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3. **From afar.** The context shows that this means "from all God's known works." Elihu will ascribe righteousness to God by a comprehensive survey of God's works.

4. **One . . . perfect in knowledge.** This is extravagant self-praise, and, like all such self-praise, is belied by the speaker's utterances.

5. **Behold, God is mighty.** The words which follow this are in the Hebrew strange and awkward. Scholars have suggested various expedients to relieve the situation. The most satisfactory is that suggested by Dr. Nichols, viz. that "strength" be transposed so as to stand immediately after "mighty," and that by dropping two letters from "mighty" in the second line we obtain the word "pure." The verse then reads:

"Behold, God is mighty in strength,
He despiseth not the pure in heart."

6. **He preserveth not the life of the wicked.** From this point onward to v. 18 the Greek and Sahidic versions presented a much shorter and better text (see Introduction, p. 20 ff). Elihu's argument becomes much clearer, if we reconstruct the text on the basis of these authorities and eliminate an interpolation still later than the Elihu writer. This first line of v. 6 should come after v. 10a (see note on v. 10). **But giveth to the afflicted their right.** The same versions found this line in v. 15; we should probably place it after that verse. For a reconstruction of the Elihu speech from vs. 6–18, see note on v. 18.

7. **He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.** With a slight change the Greek and Sahidic read this as v. 17, where we

[1] But with kings upon the throne
He setteth them for ever, and they are exalted.
8. And if they be bound in fetters,
And be taken in the cords of affliction;
9. Then he sheweth them their work,
And their transgressions, that they have behaved themselves proudly.
10. [2] He openeth also their ear to instruction,
[3] And commandeth that they return from iniquity.
11. If they hearken and serve *him*,
They shall spend their days in prosperity,
And their years in [4] pleasures.
12. [5] But if they hearken not, they shall perish by [6] the sword,

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[1] Gr. Sah. omit from this point through v. 9.
[2] Gr. Sah. read this after v. 5.
[3] Gr. Sah. omit 10b, 11.
[4] m. Or, *pleasantness*.
[5] Gr. Sah. have an entirely different verse here as follows: *For they seek not the knowledge of God, and when hastened, they hearken not.*
[6] Syr. *Abaddon*. m. Or, *weapons*.

should place it. See note on v. 18. **But with kings upon the throne.** These words introduce a new subject — that of the rule of unjust kings. The line with vs. 8, 9 are lacking in the Greek and Sahidic. They are a part of the interpolation on kings. For a reconstruction of the whole interpolation see note on v. 13.

8. **If they be bound in fetters.** This refers to the kings. It is a part of the interpolation. See note on v. 13. It probably should follow 34:33, to tell how God does actually punish a king.

9. **He sheweth.** The verse is part of the same interpolation. For its connection, see note on v. 13.

10. **He openeth their ear to instruction.** Translate rather, "Through chastening he openeth their ear." The Greek and Sahidic versions read this immediately after v. 5, which it naturally follows. They followed the line by v. 6a, "But he granteth not life to the wicked." This couplet is a part of the Elihu speech. See note on v. 18. **And commandeth that they return from iniquity.** The versions quoted show that this is a part of the interpolation concerning kings. It followed in its original setting 9b; see note on v. 13.

11. **If they hearken.** This verse continues the thought of v. 10b; see note on v. 13. **Pleasures.** Read with the margin, "pleasantness."

12. **But if they hearken not.** This is a part of the inserted

And they shall die without knowledge.
13. [1] But they that are godless in heart lay up anger:
They cry not for help when he bindeth them.

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[1] Gr. Sah. omit v. 13.

---

poem on kings, connecting with v. 11. See note on v. 13. As noted above, the Greek and Sahidic versions had a different verse here and one which belongs to the Elihu speech. See the reconstruction in note on v. 18. **By the sword.** The Syriac version reads "Abaddon," suggesting that we should read "in Sheol" instead of "by the sword."

(2) *A warning against sin*, 36 : 13–21 [genuine parts]

13. **But they that are godless.** Translate rather, "For the godless." The verse is omitted by the Greek and Sahidic versions, and forms the conclusion to the inserted poem on kings. If the verses about kings in this chapter and 34 : 28–33 were taken from the same poem, the poem might, perhaps, be reconstructed as follows:

36 : 7bc. "But kings upon the throne —
Forever he setteth them and they are exalted.
34 : 28. One brings to him the cry of the weak,
The cry of the poor he hears.
29. When he is quiet, who may condemn?
When he hides his face, who can behold him?
Whether concerning a nation or a man it is the same;
30. That the godless man should not reign,
Should not ensnare the people.
31. But say unto God, I endure,
I will not again commit sin.
32. If I have sinned, teach thou me,
If I have done wrong, I will not repeat it.
33. Shall he recompense him according to thy wish?
But thou refusest it?
Then shouldst thou choose not God?
What thou knowest, speak.
36 : 8. But if they be bound in fetters,
And taken in the cords of affliction;
9. Then he showeth them their work
And their transgressions, how they have puffed themselves up,
10b. And commandeth that they turn from iniquity.

14. [1] They die in youth,
And their life *perisheth* [2] among the [3] unclean.
15. He delivereth the afflicted [4] by his affliction,
And openeth [5] their ear [6] in oppression.
16. Yea, he would [7] have led thee away [8] out of distress

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[1] m. Heb. *Their soul dieth.* [2] Targ. *like.* m. Or, *like.* [3] m. Or, *sodomites.* See Deut. 23:17. [4] m. Or, *in.* [5] Vulg. *his.* [6] m. Or, *by adversity.* [7] Theod. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *lead thee out.* m. Or, *allured thee.* [8] m. Heb. *out of the mouth of.*

36:11. If they hearken and serve him,
They shall finish their days in prosperity,
And their years in pleasantness.
12. But if not, they pass to Sheol,
And perish without knowledge.
13. For the godless of heart lay up anger,
They cry not when he binds them."

One objection to such a reconstruction of the poem is that the verses from ch. 34 presuppose but one king, while those from ch. 36 think of kings in general. It is possible, however, that a poet might pass to the singular, to vividly illustrate by a definite instance the ways of kings and to exhort an aggrieved subject, and then return again to the general theme, to show how in the end God brings the kings themselves to justice. Such a method would in reality reënforce the exhortation to the aggrieved subject, by helping him to see that "judgment belongeth unto God." Whether these verses ever formed one connected poem must be left an open question, though it seems probable to the writer that they did.

14. **They die in youth.** Read with the margin. "Their soul perishes in youth." This verse continues the Elihu speech. For its place in the address, see the reconstruction in note on v. 18. **Unclean.** Margin, "sodomites." The word means consecrated ones and designated in the Semitic world those who were dedicated to the service of social impurity in a temple.

15. **He delivereth.** The verse continues the thought of v. 14 and is part of the Elihu speech. **By his affliction.** This gives the meaning. The marginal reading, while possible from the Hebrew, is ruled out by the context. **Their ear.** Read with the Vulgate, "his ear." **In oppression.** Read with the margin, "by adversity." Elihu is discoursing on the redemptive power of misfortune and suffering.

16. **Led thee away.** The Hebrew is accurately represented by

Into a broad place, where there is no straitness;
And that which is set on thy table should be full of fatness.
17. But thou [1] art full of the judgement of the wicked:
Judgement and justice take hold *on thee.*
18. [2] Because there is wrath, beware lest thou be [3] led away by *thy* sufficiency;
Neither let the greatness of the ransom turn thee aside.

---

[1] m. Or, *hast filled up.* [2] Gr. Syr. Vulg. Sah. Eth. Ar. omit *Because.* m. Or, *For beware lest wrath lead thee away into mockery.* [3] m. Or, *allured.*

---

the marginal reading "allured." The versions read "lead out," which is much like the text of RV and which we should follow.

This verse is omitted by the primitive Greek, and the Sahidic version. Instead of it they had with slight changes 6b and 7a of our present Hebrew text, which fit in here admirably (see the reconstruction in the note on v. 18). Verse 16 is probably a gloss, inserted after the poem on kings was woven in, to make the application to Job clear at this point. It is based on 6b and 7a, but gives the thought a slightly different turn.

17. **Thou art full of.** This verse was omitted by the Greek and Sahidic versions. It is a part of the same gloss as v. 16, and like it is an address to Job. When this is recognized one must interpret it with the text of RV and discard the marginal reading.

18. **Because there is wrath.** With the versions cited the word "because" should be omitted. By another slight change in the text we should read, "Let not wrath seduce thee in chastisement." **The greatness of the ransom.** The greatness of the suffering by which the penitence of the soul has been wrought.

This verse is a part of the Elihu address. That address from v. 5 to the present point, after the interpolations are omitted to which the ancient versions bear witness, and the rearrangement made which those versions call for, is as follows:

36 : 5. "Behold God is mighty in strength,
He despiseth not the pure in heart.
10a. Through chastening he openeth their ear,
6a. But giveth not life to the wicked;
Greek vs. 12. For they seek not the knowledge of God,
And by admonition learn not.

19. [1] Will thy [2] riches suffice, [3] *that thou be* not in distress,
Or all the forces of *thy* strength?
20. [4] Desire not the right,
When peoples [5] are cut off in their place.
21. Take heed, regard not iniquity:
For this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.
22. Behold, God doeth loftily in his power:

---

[1] m. Or *Will thy cry avail.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *prayer.* [3] m. Or, *that are without stint.* [4] Gr. Sah. omit v. 20. [5] m. Heb. *go up.*

36:14. Their soul perishes in youth,
And their life, with the unclean.
15. He delivereth the afflicted by his affliction,
And openeth his ear by oppression.
6b. Judgment to the afflicted he giveth,
7a. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.
18. Let not wrath seduce thee in chastisement,
Nor greatness of ransom turn thee aside."

By this arrangement the clearness of thought is greatly improved.

19. **Will thy riches suffice.** The present text is difficult, and out of harmony with the context. By a slight change in one of the Hebrew letters the reading would be:

"Can he order thy salvation without distress?"

Such a reading continues the thought of v. 18 admirably, and should be adopted. **Thy strength.** The word "thy," which is not in the Hebrew, should be omitted. The line continues the question of the previous line, and "strength" is parallel to "distress."

20. **Desire not the right.** The primitive Greek version supported by the Sahidic omits this verse. It interrupts the connection here and is probably a gloss. The thought of v. 19 is continued in v. 21.

21. **Regard not iniquity.** An exhortation based on vs. 18, 19, and the preceding argument. **This.** Read instead with many scholars, "iniquity."

(3) *God is too great to be criticised,* 36: 22–33 [genuine parts]

22. **Doeth loftily.** Elihu begins here to set forth the exaltation and majesty of God, a theme which he pursues to the end of his address.

Who is [1] a teacher like unto him?
23. Who hath enjoined him [2] his way?
Or who can say, Thou hast wrought unrighteousness?
24. Remember that thou magnify his work,
Whereof men have sung.
25. All men have looked thereon;
Man beholdeth it afar off.
26. [3] Behold, God is great, and we know him not;
The number of his years is unsearchable.
27. For he draweth up the drops of water,
Which [4] distil in rain [5] from [6] his vapour:

---

[1] Gr. *a lord.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *his work.* [3] Gr. Sah. omit vs. 26, 27b, 28a. [4] Theod. Targ. Eth. *they are poured out.* Vulg. *he pours out.* [5] m. Heb. *belonging to.* [6] m. Or, *the vapour thereof.*

---

23. **Who can say?** Elihu believes none has a right to criticise God, because no one is above him.

24. **Thou magnify.** It is the duty of man to praise, rather than to find fault. **Men have sung.** The chorus of praise was already well begun by the poets in Elihu's time.

25. **Afar off.** The works of God are so obvious that all have seen them; so great that they are visible from afar.

26. **Behold, God is great.** The underlying thought of this verse is the same as that of v. 22. Some scholars have on that account omitted it. In reality it is the beginning of a series of insertions of fragments of a poem on a thunder-storm — insertions which the primitive Greek version, supported by the Sahidic, omits; see Introduction, p. 20. This poem was interwoven with the Elihu speech because, like it, it magnified the work of God. When this poem is omitted the original address of Elihu gains in clearness and the poem itself resembles a psalm. For a reconstruction of the poem, see note on 37:13.

27. **For he draweth up the drops of water.** Rather, "For he restraineth." The Greek and Sahidic show that this is a part of Elihu's address, and that the concluding line of the couplet now forms the second line of v. 28. **Which distil in rain.** We should read with the Vulgate, "Which he pours out as rain." The Greek and Sahidic omit this line. It is part of the inserted poem of the rain-storm. For its place in that poem see note on 37:13.

28. Which the skies pour down
[1] And drop upon man abundantly.
29. [2] Yea, [3] can any understand the spreadings of the clouds,
The thunderings of his pavilion?
30. Behold, he spreadeth his light [4] around him;
And he [5] covereth the bottom of the sea.
31. For by these he judgeth the peoples;

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *And a cloud o'ershadows numberless men.* [2] Gr. Sah. omit vs. 29–32. [3] Syr. Ar. *And who.* Theod. Sym. Eth. *the equality.* [4] m. Or, *thereon.* [5] m. Or, *covereth* it *with the depths of the sea.*

---

28. **Which the skies pour down.** Translate rather "drop down" or "distil." By their omission of this line the same versions testify that it is a part of the rain-storm poem. With v. 27b it makes a complete parallelism. See note on 37 : 13. **And drop upon man abundantly.** The versions cited show that this line was a part of Elihu's address and that it originally ran, "And a cloud o'ershadows many men." As the line completes the parallelism beginning with 27a that reading must be adopted. The change to the present reading was made to harmonize the line with 28a. The couplet restored is:

27a. "He restraineth the drops of water;
28b. His cloud o'ershadows many men."

29. **Yea, can any understand.** Read with the versions cited, "And who can understand." The omission of vs. 29–32 by the Greek and Sahidic shows that they are a part of the poem on the rain-storm; see note on 37 : 13 for their place in it.

30. **Around him.** Read with the margin, "thereon" or "upon it." The reference is to the "clouds" of v. 29. **Bottom of the sea.** This is impossible. The bottom of the sea, as the margin of RV recognizes, has nothing to do with the thunder-cloud. We should probably, as Duhm has suggested, make a slight change in the Hebrew and read, "He covereth the tops of the mountains."

31. **Judgeth the peoples.** As the text stands the verse is an antithetic parallelism, the first line stating that by storms God sends judgments, and the second that the rains are the means of food supply. It is, perhaps, better to change with some scholars a single letter of the Hebrew and read:

"For by these he fills peoples,
He gives food in abundance."

He giveth meat in abundance.
32. He covereth his hands with the [1] lightning;
And giveth it a charge [2] that it strike the mark.
33. [3] The noise thereof telleth concerning [4] him,
The cattle also concerning [5] *the storm* that cometh up.
37. At this also my heart trembleth,
And is moved out of its place.
2. [6] Hearken [7] ye unto the noise of his voice,

---

[1] m. Heb. *light.* [2] m. Or, *against the assailant.* [3] Gr. Sah. had for v. 33, *He appointeth a time for cattle; they know the place of their lying down.* [4] m. Or, *it.* [5] m. Or, *him.* [6] Gr. Sah. omit vs. 2–5a. [7] Theod. Syr. Eth. *thou.*

Reference to the more terrible aspects of the storm would then begin in v. 32.

32. **He covereth his hands with the lightning.** A very vivid figure; God wraps the lightning about his hands that he may hurl it with sure aim. **Strike the mark.** Read as the text does, ignoring the margin. Shooting at a target was a worthy sport for an Egyptian prince (afterward Thothmes IV) in the fifteenth century B.C. From such sport the figure is taken.

33. **The noise thereof . . . the cattle.** The two parts of this verse are incongruous, and no satisfactory interpretation of it as it stands has been suggested. The primitive Greek and Sahidic versions read it in quite a different form after v. 28b, thus:

> "He appointeth a time for cattle,
> They know the place of their lying down."

The present corruption of the verse was, no doubt, brought about in order to bring it into harmony with the insertion from the rain-storm poem. For its original connection, see note on 37:12.

(4) *Elihu trembles at the thought of God's greatness*, 37:1–13 [genuine parts]

1. **At this also my heart trembleth.** This verse belongs to the speech of Elihu. Before the interpolation of the poem on the thunder-storm it was followed immediately by v. 5b, to which it directly points. Elihu's heart trembled, not at what he had just described, but at that which he was about to portray. For a reconstruction of that picture as it was originally drawn, see note on v. 12.

2. **Hearken ye unto the noise of his voice.** The Sahidic and

And the [1] sound that goeth out of his mouth.
3. He sendeth it forth under the whole heaven,
And his [2] lightning unto the [3] ends of the earth.
4. After it [4] a voice roareth;
He thundereth with the voice of his majesty:
And he stayeth them not when his voice is heard.
5. God thundereth marvellously with his voice;
Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.
6. For he saith to the snow, Fall thou on the earth;
[5] Likewise to the shower of rain,

---

[1] m. Or, *muttering*. [2] m. Heb. *light*. [3] m. Heb. *skirts*. [4] 2 Heb. MSS. *his voice*.
[5] Syr. Ar. have for the rest of the verse simply, *the rain and his mighty storm*.

---

primitive Greek versions show that this verse is a part of the poem on the thunder-storm, as are vs. 3–5a. It followed 36:32; see note on v. 13 below. The words are descriptive of the thunder, which is often called in the Old Testament the "voice of Jehovah."

3. **Under the whole heaven.** A vivid description of the seeming extent of the lightning's flash.

4. **A voice.** Read with two Hebrew manuscripts, "his voice." **He stayeth them not.** As the text stands it is not clear to what "them" referred. Originally v. 6b probably formed a concluding line which connected directly with v. 4, the two lines probably reading (see notes on vs. 5, 6):

> "And he stayeth them not when his voice is heard —
> The rain and his mighty storm."

5. **God thundereth marvellously with his voice.** Scholars have pretty generally recognized that this is a gloss on v. 4. It was added probably after the interpolation of the psalm on the storm. It belongs neither to that psalm nor to the speech of Elihu. **Great things doeth he.** The Sahidic and Greek versions show that this connects directly with v. 1 as a part of Elihu's address. It is the beginning of the statement of the reasons why Elihu trembles. See note on v. 12. **Which we cannot comprehend.** The Hebrew is literally, "And we do not know."

6. **For he saith to the snow, Fall thou on the earth.** As the same versions show, this is a part of Elihu's speech, and completes the couplet begun in v. 5b. **Likewise to the shower of rain.**

And to the showers of his mighty rain.
7. He sealeth up the hand of every man;
That all men whom he hath made may know *it.*
8. Then the beasts go into coverts,
And remain in their dens.
9. Out of [1] the chamber *of the south* cometh the storm:
And cold out of the [2] north.
10. By the breath of God ice is given:
And the breadth of the waters is [3] straitened.
11. [4] Yea, he ladeth the thick cloud with moisture;

---

[1] m. See 9:9. [2] m. Heb. *scattering* winds. [3] m. Or, *congealed.* [4] Gr. Sah. omit v. 11 and 12ab.

There is unpoetical repetition in the last two lines of the verse. We should read with the Syriac and Arabic versions, simply:

"The rain and his mighty storm."

This line forms the conclusion of v. 4 and is a part of the psalm of the rain-storm. See notes on vs. 4 and 13.

7. **He sealeth up the hand of every man.** This is a very curious statement, and without meaning. With several scholars we should read, changing one Hebrew letter, "On every man he setteth a seal." The seal is the snow which surrounds the dwellings of men, and interrupts their activities. Verses 7–10 form part of Elihu's address. See note on v. 12. **Whom he hath made.** It is better to render simply, "may know his work."

8. **Go into coverts.** Snow hampers the movements of animals as well as of men.

9. **Of the south.** This is not in the Hebrew. It is doubtfully supplied from 9:9. **North.** As the margin tells us, the Hebrew word means simply "scatterings," to which the Revisers added "winds." It is better with a number of scholars to make the slightest change in one Hebrew letter and read "granaries." The idea then is that God keeps his storms in chambers and his cold in granaries and brings them out as he sees fit.

10. **Straitened.** Read with the margin, "congealed." The winds are figuratively described as the breath of God. Verses 9, 10 continue the discourse of Elihu; see note on v. 12.

11. **He ladeth the thick cloud.** The Sahidic and primitive Greek versions omit this verse and the first two lines of v. 12, show-

He spreadeth abroad the cloud of his [1] lightning:
12. And it is turned round about by his guidance,
That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them
Upon the face of the habitable world:

---

[1] m. Heb. *light.*

---

ing that they formed part of the psalm on the thunder-storm; cf. note on v. 13. **With moisture.** The Hebrew word used here is very unusual, if not impossible. It is better to suppose with Budde that it is a part of the word for lightning, the end of which was accidentally erased. **Lightning.** Read with the margin "light."

12. **And it is turned round about.** The translation of the Revisers regards the verse as consisting of three lines, whereas it consists of four, thus:

"And it is turned round about,
By his guidance to work.
All this he commands
On the face of the earthly world."

Of these four lines the first two belonged, according to the Greek and Sahidic versions, to the rain-storm poem (see note on v. 13), the last two formed the conclusion of this part of Elihu's address.

Elihu's address, then, when the rain-storm poem is omitted, may be reconstructed from 36:25 as follows:

36:25. "All men have looked thereon,
Man beholdeth it from afar.
27a. For he restraineth the drops of water,
28b. His cloud o'ershadows many men.
33. He appointeth a time for cattle,
They know the place of their lying down.
37:1. At this also my heart trembles,
And is moved out of its place.
5b. Great things doeth he and we know them not,
6a. For he saith to the snow, 'Fall earthward.'
7. On every man he setteth a seal,
That all men may know his doing.
8. Then the beasts go into coverts,
And remain in their dens.
9. Out of the chamber cometh the storm,
And from the granaries, the cold.

13. [1] Whether it be for correction, or for his [2] land,
Or for mercy, that he cause it to come.
14. Hearken unto this, O Job:

---

[1] Gr. and Sah. omit v. 13.

[2] m. Or, *earth.*

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37 : 10. By the breath of God ice is given,
And the breadth of the waters is congealed.
12cd. All this he commands
On the face of the earthly world."

13. **Or for his land.** "Or" should be omitted here. We should read the line, "Whether for correction on his land." The Greek and Sahidic versions show that this verse was a part of the psalm of the rain-storm — in fact, its concluding couplet. That psalm when put together reads as follows:

36 : 26. "Behold God is great; we know him not;
The number of his years is unsearchable.
27b. He pours out rain as his mist,
28a. Which the clouds distil,
29. And who can understand the spreading of the clouds,
The thunderings of his pavilion?
30. Behold on it he spreads his light,
He covers the tops of the mountains.
31. For by these he fills peoples;
He gives food in abundance.
32. He covereth his hands with the lightning,
He commands it to hit the mark.
37 : 2. Hearken to the noise of his voice,
And the sound going out of his mouth.
3. Under the whole heaven he sends it,
And his light to the ends of the earth.
4. After it his voice roareth,
With the voice of his majesty he thunders;
And he stayeth them not when his voice is heard.
6b. The rain and his mighty storm.
11. Yea, he ladeth the thick cloud with lightning,
He spreadeth abroad the cloud of his light.
12ab. And is turned round about,
By his guidance to work,
13. Whether for judgment on his land,
Or in mercy he command it."

Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.
15. Dost thou know [1]how God layeth *his charge* upon them,
And causeth the [2]lightning of his cloud to shine?
16. Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds,
The wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?
17. [3] How thy garments are warm,
[4] When the earth is still by reason of the south *wind?*
18. Canst thou with him spread out the sky,
Which is strong as a molten mirror?
19. Teach [5] us what we shall say unto him;
For we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *how God accomplishes his works.* [2] m. Heb. *light.* [3] m. Or, *Thou whose garments are &c.* [4] m. Or, *When he quieteth the earth by the south* wind. [5] 25 Heb. MSS. Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *me.*

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(5) *Let Job consider God's work in the heavens*, 37 : 14–18

14. **Consider the wondrous works of God.** Having told Job in vs. 1–12 [genuine portions] how the great manifestations of God in nature impressed him, Elihu asks Job to consider them especially.

15. **Layeth his charge upon them.** Read with the versions cited, "how God accomplishes his works."

16. **Balancings.** Rather the poising of the clouds in the sky, where, though laden with moisture, they float without support.

17. **How thy garments are warm.** Read with the margin, "Thou whose garments are warm." The verse is a very vivid touch, revealing actual experience of a sirocco. One's very garments are hot, and the heat quiets all activities.

18. **Strong as a molten mirror.** The reference is to the Hebrew and Babylonian conception of the sky as a solid, overarching vault, in which the stars were fixed and which supported a celestial ocean; cf. Gen. 1 : 6, 7, 14–16.

(6) *How shall one address a being so great?* 37 : 19–24

19. **Teach us.** Read with the authorities cited, "Teach me." Elihu is overawed by the instances which he has cited. **Darkness.** Mental darkness or ignorance.

20. Shall it be told him that I would speak?
[1] Or should a man wish that he were swallowed up?
21. And now men [2] see not the light which is bright in the skies:
But the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.
22. Out of the north cometh [3] golden splendour:
God hath upon him terrible majesty.
23. *Touching* the Almighty, we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power:
And [4] in judgement and plenteous justice he will not afflict.

---

[1] m. Or, *If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.* [2] m. Or, *cannot look on the light when it is bright in the skies, when the wind hath passed and cleansed them.* [3] m. Heb. *gold.* [4] m. Or, *to judgement . . . he doeth no violence.*

---

20. **Should a man wish that he were swallowed up?** Read with the margin, "If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up." God is so great that Elihu would not think of intimating that he wished to speak to him, declaring that, if one should actually speak, he would be destroyed. The reference is to Job's oft-expressed wish to speak to God.

21. **See not the light.** Read with the margin, "cannot look upon the light when it is bright in the skies, when the wind hath passed and cleansed them." Elihu means that men cannot look even on the brilliance of the cloudless skies, how much less on God!

22. **Golden splendor.** As the margin tells us, the Hebrew has simply "gold." We should, however, change a single letter of it and read "brightness." The reference is probably to the aurora borealis. In post-Exilic times the Hebrews believed that the home of God was in the north, and the aurora may well have been regarded as a splendor issuing forth from God.

23. **Touching the Almighty.** Neither the text nor margin of RV is satisfactory. The Hebrew has three lines and should be rendered thus:

"The Almighty — we cannot find him;
He abounds in strength and justice;
And abundant righteousness he will not violate."

The last clause refers to Job's complaints that God has dealt harshly with him.

24. Men do therefore fear him:
He regardeth not any that are wise of heart.

V. JEHOVAH'S ADDRESS AND THE FINAL COLLOQUY BETWEEN JEHOVAH AND JOB, 38:1–42:6

1. *The Great Address of Jehovah*, 38:1–40:2

38. Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
2. Who is this that darkeneth counsel
By words without knowledge?
3. Gird up now thy loins [1] like a man;

---

[1] 1 Heb. MS. Syr. Ar. *like a mighty man.*

24. **Men do therefore fear him.** This Elihu regards as the correct attitude. **Regardeth not . . . wise of heart.** He pays no attention to those who are conceited enough to think they know better than he does.

(1) *Jehovah challenges Job's attention*, 38:1–3

1. **Then the Lord answered Job.** With this verse the work of the original poet is resumed, these words connecting directly with 31:40. The vigorous poetry which follows in chs. 38, 39 is in delightful contrast to that of the Elihu writers. The great author of Job reserved his finest flight for Jehovah's address. In chs. 29–31 Job's thought had centred on his relation to God. All other problems had fallen into the background. The address of Jehovah solves for him the problem of this relationship, not by what Jehovah says, grand as that is, but by personal contact with Jehovah himself. **Whirlwind.** Better, "storm." The poet employs even here the old Hebrew idea that God both reveals and veils himself in the storm-cloud.

2. **Who is this.** As v. 1 shows, the reference is to Job. If chs. 32–37 were an original part of the poem, the reference should be to Elihu. **Words without knowledge.** Job had criticised the order of life and God's dealings with him as though he understood everything. The first lesson he must be taught was one of humility. His knowledge was not unlimited.

3. **Gird up thy loins.** Job is scornfully invited to the contest he has so often demanded. **Like a man.** Read with the authorities cited, "like a mighty man" or "like a man of war."

For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
4. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Declare[1], if thou hast understanding.
5. Who determined the measures thereof, [2] if thou knowest?
Or who stretched the line upon it?
6. Whereupon were the [3] foundations thereof [4] fastened?
Or who laid the corner stone thereof;
7. When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

---

[1] m. Heb. *if thou knowest understanding.* [2] m. Or, *seeing.* [3] m. Heb. *sockets.* [4] m. Heb. *made to sink.*

---

(2) *Where was Job when the foundations of the world were laid?* 38:4–15

4. **Where wast thou.** Of course there was but one answer; Job did not yet exist. This is the first of a series of ironical questions intended to make Job realize his insignificance and ignorance.

5. **If thou knowest.** Margin, "seeing thou knowest." Render "for thou knowest." The statement is a fine bit of irony. It brings into strong relief Job's ignorance of these matters.

6. **Foundations.** Literally "bases" or "sockets." In these the pillars which supported the world (cf. 9:6 and note) were supposed to rest. These bases apparently rested on nothing, cf. 26:7 and note.

7. **Morning stars sang.** In the heathen world stars and gods were associated; here stars and angels. They are "morning stars" because the earth's foundations were laid in the morning of the world. The allusion to singing is a mythological one, and, like the references to leviathan in 3:8 and to Rahab in 9:13 and 26:12, shows the influence of the Babylonian Creation myth. In that myth the gods raised a hymn of praise to Marduk when Marduk had completed the creation of the world; see L. W. King's *Seven Tablets of Creation.* Vol. I, p. 72 ff. **Sons of God.** Beings of the divine class, or angels. See note on 1:6.

8. Or *who* shut up the sea with doors,
When it brake forth[1], *as if* it had issued out of the womb;
9. When I made the cloud the garment thereof,
And thick darkness a swaddling band for it,
10. And [2] prescribed for it [3] my [4] decree,
And set bars and doors,
11. And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;
And here shall [5] thy proud waves be stayed?
12. [6] Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days *began*,
And caused the dayspring to know its place;
13. That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,
And the wicked be shaken out of it?

---

[1] m. Or, *and issued.* [2] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *I established.* m. Heb. *brake.* [3] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. *a decree.* [4] m. Or, *boundary.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *the pride of thy waves be broken.* [6] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Is it from thee I have commanded.*

---

8. **Shut up the sea with doors.** Again an allusion to the Babylonian Creation myth. For the way in which Marduk, in whose place Jehovah is here put, closed the door against the destructive waters of the primal sea, cf. the quotation from the Babylonian poem given above in note on 26 : 13. **Issued out of the womb.** Descriptive of the onrush of the destructive waters. It is better to read with the margin, "and issued," for the next verse shows that the figure is changed and the poet suddenly represents the day of creation as the birthday of the sea.

9. **Garment . . . swaddling band.** The clothing of the newborn sea — a beautiful poetic metaphor.

10. **Bars and doors.** Again a mythological allusion; see note on 26 : 13.

11. **Thy proud waves be stayed.** Read with the versions cited, "the pride of thy waves be broken."

12. **Commanded the morning.** That it may know what time each day to appear. **Know its place.** In the sky, *i.e.* on the eastern horizon.

13. **The wicked be shaken out of it.** As one shakes dust out of a garment. For the way the wicked avoid the light, see 24 : 13–17.

14. It is changed as clay under the seal;
And *all things* stand forth [1] as a garment:
15. And from the wicked their light is withholden,
And the high arm is broken.
16. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?
Or hast thou walked in the [2] recesses of the deep?
17. Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee?
[3] Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?
18. Hast thou comprehended the breadth of the earth?
Declare, if thou knowest [4] it all.
19. Where is the way to the dwelling of light,
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof;

---

[1] m. Or, *as* in *a garment.* [2] m. Or, *search.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *And have the porters of the shadow of death seen thee?* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *how great.*

---

14. **And all things stand forth.** Perhaps by a slight change of the Hebrew letters we should read "And be variegated." **As a garment.** The text is to be preferred to the marginal reading.

15. **The high arm is broken.** Because their power lies in darkness.

(3) *Does Job know the secrets of the earth?* 38:16–30

16. **Springs of the sea.** The fountains of the great deep, which led from the supposed subterranean ocean; see Gen. 7:11; 8:2.

17. **The gates of death.** Sheol lay below the sea (see note on 26:5). It was natural therefore to mention it next after the sea. **The gates of the shadow of death.** Probably we should read with the versions cited, "Have the porters of the shadow of death seen thee?" Probably an allusion to the "scorpion men," etc., who in the Babylonian Gilgamesh epic guard the way to the underworld. The thought then is that Job has not been even in sight of the porters of Sheol, so he can know nothing of that which lies beyond.

18. **Breadth.** From depth God passes to breadth. The earth was considered flat. **It all.** Read with the versions, "Declare if thou knowest how great." The breadth of the earth surpassed Job's knowledge as much as did the depths of Sheol.

19. **Light . . . darkness.** Considered here as physical entities with local habitations.

20. That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,
And that thou shouldest discern the paths to the house thereof?
21. *Doubtless,* [1] thou knowest, for thou wast then born,
And the number of thy days is great!
22. Hast thou entered the treasuries of the snow,
Or hast thou seen the treasuries of the hail,
23. Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
Against the day of battle and war?
24. [2] By what way is the [3] light parted,
Or the east wind scattered upon the earth?
25. Who hath cleft a channel for the waterflood,
Or a way for the lightning of the thunder;

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *I know.* [2] m. Or, *Which is the way* to the place where *the light is &c.* [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *mist.*

---

20. **Discern the paths to the house thereof.** As several scholars have noted, a slight change in the Hebrew would enable us to read, "bring it to the paths of its house," which would give a much better parallelism with the preceding line.

21. **Thou knowest.** Again we have cutting irony. The versions quoted apparently thought it too bold and changed the verb to the first person.

22. **Treasuries.** Compare 37:9 and note. Here the thought is similar. God keeps his marvellous snow in treasuries and brings it out at will. **Treasuries of the hail.** Some scholars would change two Hebrew letters and read "treasurers of the hail." It would make better poetry, and finds analogy in Ethiopic Enoch, ch. 60, where different spirits preside over, guard, and direct each physical phenomenon.

23. **Against the time of trouble.** Hail is frequently mentioned as an instrument of divine judgment and warfare; see Josh. 10:11; Ps. 18:12, 13; Isa. 28:17; 30:30; Eze. 13:13.

24. **Light parted.** Read with the versions cited, "the mist allotted." Light has been treated above.

25. **Waterflood.** The rain, which was supposed to come through a "channel" from an ocean above the sky, cf. Gen. 7:11; 8:2. **Way for the lightning.** God has ordained the track of the lightning also. This line was borrowed by the interpolator of 28:26.

26. To cause it to rain on a land where no man is;
On the wilderness, wherein there is no man;
27. To satisfy the waste and desolate *ground;*
And to cause the [1] tender grass to spring forth?
28. Hath the rain a father?
Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?
29. Out of whose womb came the ice?
And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath [2] gendered it?
30. The waters [3] are hidden as *with* stone
And the face of the deep [4] is frozen.
31. Canst thou bind the [5] cluster of the Pleiades,

---

[1] m. Or, *greensward.* [2] m. Or, *given it birth.* [3] m. Or, *are congealed like stone.* [4] m. Heb. *cohereth.* [5] m. Or, *chain,* or, *sweet influences.*

---

26. **Where no man is.** Such is God's bounty that he does not confine his rain to inhabited regions as a man would.

27. **Tender grass.** The margin renders "greensward," but it is better with several scholars to make a slight change in the Hebrew and read, "And to cause the thirsty land to bring forth grass."

28. **Dew.** To the ancients this seemed kindred to the rain, but was a still greater mystery because it came without clouds.

29. **Gendered it.** Read with the margin, "hath given it birth."

30. **Hidden . . . frozen.** As the verse stands the first line is unintelligible. The waters cannot be said by freezing to hide themselves like stone. With several scholars we should transpose the verbs and read:

"The waters are frozen like stone
And the face of the deep is hidden."

(4) *Does Job control the constellations?* 38:31–38

31. **Canst thou.** Better "Didst thou." **Cluster.** Read with the first margin, "chain." **Pleiades.** The Hebrew word denotes a constellation, but whether Pleiades or Canis Major (*i.e.* the star Sirius) is in doubt. As the next line mentions Orion, the hunter, "the chain" might well be that which binds the dog-

Or loose the [1] bands of Orion?
32. Canst thou lead forth [2] the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou [3] guide [4] the Bear with her [5] train?
33. Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens?
Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth?
34. Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,
That abundance of waters [6] may cover thee?
35. Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go,
And say unto thee, Here we are?
36. Who hath put wisdom in the [7] inward parts?
Or who hath given understanding to the [8] mind?

---

[1] Syr. Ar. Eth. *way*. Vulg. Sah. *circle*. Gr. *hedge*. [2] m. Or, *the signs of the Zodiac*. [3] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *cause to rise*. [4] Gr. Aq. *the evening star*. [5] m. Heb. *sons*. [6] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *shall answer thee*. [7] m. Or, *dark clouds*. [8] Sym. Syr. Ar. *the fool*. m. Or, *meteor*.

---

star to the hunter. **Bands of Orion.** The reading "bands" is uncertain, as the versions cited show. If we read "way" with the Syriac, etc., the meaning would be "Canst thou change his course?" If we read "circle," the thought is, "Didst thou loose his girdle?"

32. **Mazzaroth.** The interpretation of the margin, "signs of the Zodiac," is very doubtful. The Hebrew treats the word as a singular, and it is probably the name of some star or constellation, but which we cannot now determine. **Guide the Bear with her train.** The Bear is a well-known constellation; see note on 9 : 9. Perhaps we gain a stronger meaning here, if, on the basis of the versions cited, we read:

"Canst thou cause Vesperus to rise with her sons?"

33. **Knowest thou.** As some scholars have suggested, we should slightly change the Hebrew pointing and read, "Dost thou cause the heavens to know laws?" *i.e.* Dost thou teach the laws of movement to these heavenly bodies?

34. **Cover thee.** A clearer thought and better poetry is obtained, if we read with the versions as above, "answer thee."

36. **Inward parts.** Read with the margin, "dark clouds," or with some scholars, "cloud layers." In this context reference to mental powers is out of place. **Mind.** Symmachus and others

37. Who can [1] number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can [2] pour out the bottles of heaven,
38. When the dust runneth into a mass,
And the clods cleave fast together?
39. Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness?
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,
40. When they couch in their dens,
And abide in the covert to lie in wait?
41. Who provideth for the raven his food,
When his young ones cry unto God,
And [3] wander for lack of meat?
39. Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?

---

[1] Aq. (Syr. Hex.) *break*. [2] m. Heb. *cause to lie down*. [3] Syr. Ar. *grow weary*.

read "fool," which happens in Hebrew to have the same form as the word rendered "Orion" in v. 31 and in 9 : 9. Probably, therefore, the name of some constellation stood here, but we cannot tell what it was. Some think of "meteor," as the margin suggests; others, of the aurora. These were either thought to have intelligence or as means of prognostication to convey intelligence to men.

37. **Number.** Read with Aquila, "break." It makes a better parallelism with the next line.

38. **When the dust runneth into a mass.** This portrays the effect of rain upon the earth.

(5) *Does Job care for the various wild animals?* 38 : 39–39 : 30

39. **Hunt the prey for the lioness.** Having by skilful questioning reminded Job of his powerlessness to control the heavenly marvels, Jehovah begins now to exhibit in the same way his powerlessness to control the wonders of the nearer and more familiar animal life upon the earth. The lion, the king of beasts, is mentioned first.

41. **Raven.** A bird is next taken for illustration. We have not a scientific list, but poetic variety. **Wander.** Read with the versions cited, "grow weary." Nestlings do not wander, but from lack of food their cries may become faint.

1. **Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?** The word for goats is in the Hebrew masculine, and the line as it stands is identical with v. 2b. Probably we should

Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?
2. Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?
[1] Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?
3. They bow themselves, they bring forth their young,
They cast out their sorrows.
4. Their young ones are [2] in good liking, they grow
up in the open field;
They go forth, and [3] return not again.
5. Who hath sent out the wild ass free?
Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?
6. Whose house I have made the wilderness,
And the salt land his dwelling place.
7. He scorneth the tumult of the city,
Neither heareth he the shoutings of the [4] driver.
8. [5] The range of the mountains is his pasture,
And he searcheth after every green thing.

---

[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Or dost thou loosen their birth-pangs?* [2] Theod. Sym. Vulg. Eth. *are scattered* (or *cast out*). [3] m. Or, *return not unto them.* [4] m. Or, *taskmaster.* [5] Theod. Vulg. Targ. Eth. *He spies out.*

---

with Duhm read, "Dost thou teach the wild rock-goats heat?" The second line would then follow naturally. The rock-goat or ibex is very shy.

2. **Knowest thou the time.** Job is ignorant of many details of animal life, which God in his wisdom has ordered and which God follows with sympathetic intelligence.

3. **Cast out their sorrows.** God has tenderly provided that their maternal pains shall be short.

4. **Are in good liking.** Read with the versions, "are cast out" or "become separated." **Return not again.** Read with the margin, "return not unto them." The early age at which they become independent is a wise provision of God's.

5. **Wild ass free.** A supreme example of a lover of liberty, in striking contrast to his drudge of a brother — the domesticated ass.

6. **Wilderness.** The land "where no man is" (38:26) — the ideal home for a wild animal.

8. **The range of the mountains.** Read with the versions cited, by changing one vowel in the Hebrew, "He spies out the mountains as his pasture."

9. Will the [1] wild-ox be content to serve thee?
Or will he abide by thy crib?
10. [2] Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his band in the furrow?
Or will he harrow [3] the valleys after thee?
11. Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?
Or wilt thou leave to him thy labour?
12. Wilt thou confide in him, that he will bring home thy seed,
And gather *the corn of* thy threshing-floor?
13. [4] The wing of the ostrich rejoiceth;
But are her pinions and feathers [5] kindly?
14. For she leaveth her eggs on the earth,

---

[1] m. See Num. 23:22. [2] Gr. Syr. Eth. Ar. *Canst thou bind his neck with thongs?*
[3] Gr. OLat. Eth. *thy furrows.* [4] Gr. omits vs. 13–18, the description of the ostrich.
[5] Sym. *like the great owl's.* m. Or, *like the stork's.*

---

9. **Wild-ox.** The Hebrew word is the same here as the Assyrian for "wild-ox." Assyrian sculptures picture him as a huge animal of the bovine variety, belonging to a species now extinct. Tiglathpileser I about 1100 B.C. regarded it as a great feat to have killed four of them, and later Assyrian kings used the phrase "overran his land like a wild-ox" as a synonym for great destructive power. In the light of these facts the question in our verse is most significant.

10. **The wild-ox.** The versions show that this has been wrongly repeated from v. 9. We gain a much better verse if we read with the versions cited:

"Canst thou bind with thongs his neck?
Or will he harrow thy furrows after thee?"

13. **Are her pinions and feathers kindly?** Symmachus read, "like the great owl's," and the margin suggests, "like the stork's." Ley would change the text and read "Are its pinions and feathers too short?" If we keep the text as it stands, the explanation is found in Lam. 4:3, where Israel is said to be cruel because, like the ostrich, she refuses to give shelter to her young. The stork was called "kindly," because she fondly brooded her young. That contrast is here suggested.

14. **Leaveth her eggs.** It was formerly believed that the ostrich did not sit upon her eggs at all, but that is only partially

And warmeth them in the dust,
15. And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,
Or that the wild beast may trample them.
16. She [1] is hardened against her young ones, as if they were not hers:
Though her labour be in vain, *she is* without fear;
17. Because God hath [2] deprived her of wisdom,
Neither hath he imparted to her understanding.
18. What time she [3] lifteth up herself on high,
She scorneth the horse and his rider.
19. Hast thou given the horse *his* might?
Hast thou clothed his neck with [4] the quivering mane?
20. Hast thou made him to leap as a locust?

---

[1] m. Or, *dealeth hardly with.* [2] m. Heb. *made her to forget wisdom.* [3] m. Or, *rouseth herself to flight.* [4] m. Heb. *shaking.*

---

true. She does not brood until she has laid her full complement of thirty eggs, and then in the early stages of incubation often leaves the nest by day. Toward the end of the period, however, she does not leave the nest at all. While brooding she lays a number of eggs outside the nest for the young birds to eat after they are hatched.

16. **Young ones.** This is used by anticipation; it is really the eggs that she abandons. **Her labour be in vain.** That is in the case the eggs are crushed and no young are born.

17. **Deprived her of wisdom.** The Arabs have a proverbial saying, "more stupid than an ostrich." One of their poets explains that it is because she abandons her eggs.

18. **Lifteth up herself on high.** This phrase implies flight like other birds, and that is just what the ostrich does not do. With Wright and Budde we should slightly change the Hebrew and read, "What time the archers come." **Scorneth the horse.** She is very fleet of foot.

19. **Quivering mane.** The word does not occur elsewhere and perhaps refers to the arched and quivering neck. Whether the mane or the neck is designated, it was thought to symbolize the energy and spirit of a noble steed.

20. **To leap as a locust.** In Joel 2 : 4 and Rev. 9 : 7 the comparison is reversed.

The glory of his snorting is terrible.
21. [1] He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth [2] in his strength;
He goeth out to meet [3] the armed men.
22. He mocketh at fear, and is not dismayed;
Neither turneth he back from the sword.
23. [4] The quiver rattleth [5] against him,
The flashing spear and the javelin.
24. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;
[6] Neither [7] believeth he that it is the voice of the trumpet.
25. As oft as the trumpet *soundeth* he saith, Aha!
And he smelleth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting.
26. Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom,
And stretch her wings toward the south?
27. Doth the eagle mount up at thy command,

---

[1] m. Heb. *They paw.*
[2] Heb. *in strength.* Gr. Eth. connect this with the last line.
[3] m. Or, *the weapons.*
[4] Gr. Eth. *The bow.*
[5] m. Or, *upon.*
[6] m. Or, *Neither standeth he still.*
[7] Sym. *he will not be revealed.* Syr. Ar. *he is not afraid of.* Vulg. *he does not run.*

---

21. **He paweth.** The Greek, Syriac, Vulgate, and Ethiopic versions support this reading. The margin, "They paw," may be disregarded. **In his strength.** Connect this, as the versions cited do, with the last clause, rendering:

> "He paws in the valley and rejoices;
> In strength he goes out to meet armor."

24. **He swalloweth the ground.** A poetic figure for fleet galloping. **Neither believeth he that it is.** Neither the text nor the margin affords a good sense. Read with the Syriac and Arabic versions:

> "Neither is he afraid of the voice of the trumpet."

26. **By thy wisdom.** Did Job teach the hawk to go southward at the approach of winter? Cf. Jer. 8:7.

27. **Mount up at thy command.** The lofty flight of the eagle has impressed men of every age. Did Job give it the power?

And make her nest on high?
28. She dwelleth on the rock, and hath her lodging *there*,
Upon the crag of the rock, and the strong hold.
29. From thence she spieth out the prey;
Her eyes behold it afar off.
30. Her young ones also [1] suck up blood:
And where the slain are, there is she.
40. [2] Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,
2. Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty?
He that argueth with God, let him answer it.

2. *Job declines to answer*, 40:3–5

3. Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
4. Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?

---

[1] Gr. OLat. *are rolled in*. Aq. Sym. Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *suck blood*. [2] 1 Heb. MS. and Gr. omit this verse.

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30. **Suck up.** Read rather with Aquila and the kindred versions, "suck blood." Although birds are not mammals, it is bold poetic metaphor, and expresses the fact that eaglets are nurtured on blood.

(6) *Jehovah calls upon Job to answer him*, 40:1, 2

1. **Moreover the Lord answered Job.** This verse is, like 27:1; 29:1; 34:1; 35:1; and 36:1, an editorial addition. It should be omitted. Verse 2 connects directly with 39:30.

2. **Shall he that cavilleth.** Literally, "Will a fault-finder contend with the Almighty?" This connects directly with 39:30. God has shown in chs. 38, 39 how ignorant Job is of the universe and of life. He is not an intelligent critic of it, but simply a fault-finder. Does he have the temerity to contend with the Almighty? **Let him answer.** The address of God here reverts to the demand made in 38:3. Job had there been warned that he would be called upon to answer, as he had previously declared he would be glad to do. Having probed his ignorance, Jehovah returns to this demand. **It** refers to the display of God's glory and power in creation.

4. **I am of small account.** To come face to face with the Creator and Sustainer of the mysteries of life had made Job

I lay mine hand upon my mouth.
5. Once have I spoken, and I will not answer;
Yea twice, but I will proceed no further.

3. *Jehovah's Second Address to Job*, 40:6–14

6. Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind,
and said,
7. Gird up thy loins now [1] like a man:
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
8. Wilt thou even disannul my judgement?
Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?

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[1] Syr. Ar. *like a mighty man.*

feel his own insignificance. This was the first step necessary to a healthy frame of mind. His sufferings, as is shown by his earlier speeches, had made him extremely egotistical; the universe seemed to centre in him. He now realizes what an atom he is. **Lay my hand upon my mouth.** In token of silence.

5. **Once . . . twice.** A Hebrew way of saying "a few times;" see note on 5:19. **I will not answer.** Many scholars, by changing one letter of the Hebrew, read, "I will not repeat it." Job's submission at this point is, as Marshall has pointed out, a sullen submission. He bows to a superior power. Peake objects to this view on the ground that the second speech of Jehovah is of the same character as the first, and was no more likely than that to produce real repentance, and that the penitence was caused by the vision of God itself, and not by what God said. While Peake is quite right in this, he has overlooked the fact that it takes time for a strong man to change his mind. By picturing Job as at first a little sullen the poet has portrayed a psychological reality. It took the vision of God a little time to exercise its softening influences upon Job.

6. **Out of the whirlwind.** These words are probably a gloss introduced from 38:1. The verse probably read, "Then the Lord answered Job and said."

7. **Gird up thy loins now.** This verse is a gloss. It is a repetition of 38:3.

8. **Disannul my judgement.** Deny my rectitude as Ruler of the world. This verse should follow immediately on v. 6. **Condemn me.** A justification of Job's utterances would be a condemnation of God.

9. Or hast thou an arm like God?
And canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
10. Deck thyself now with excellency and dignity;
And array thyself with honour and majesty.
11. [1] Pour forth the overflowings of thine anger:
And look upon every one that is proud, and abase him.
12. Look on [2] every one that is proud, *and* bring him low;
And tread down the wicked [3] where they stand.
13. Hide them in the dust together;
Bind their faces in the hidden *place*.
14. Then will I also confess of thee
That thine own right hand can save thee.

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[1] Gr. Eth. *Send forth the messengers.* [2] Gr. Eth. *every high one.* [3] Gr. Eth. *immediately.*

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9. **An arm like God.** The appeal is not to God's goodness, — that the poet did not, perhaps, fully discern, — nor to his wisdom, but to his power. However, as power is treated in the following verses it is not presented in an offensive aspect, and the choice is justified. Power as the poet presents it turns out to be power guided by wisdom. **Thunder with a voice.** The thunder was regarded by the Hebrews as the voice of God. It is referred to because of the loudness of thunder. The following verses imply that one must speak in stentorian tones even louder than thunder to make the ungodly obey.

10. **Deck thyself now with excellency.** The verse begins a fine bit of irony.

11. **Overflowings.** Read with the versions cited "messengers of thy anger." **Look upon.** This has crept back here from v. 12. We should read the line, "And every proud one — humble him."

12. **Every one that is proud.** Read with the versions cited "every high one." It makes better poetry, and the contrast with "humbling" is stronger. **Where they stand.** Read with the versions, "immediately." Job in his impatience had seemed to demand such sudden destruction as a characteristic of real justice.

13. **Hide them in the dust.** As "tread down" in v. 12 means "kill," so "hide in the dust" means "bury them." **The hidden place.** Apparently Sheol.

14. **Confess of thee.** Better, "praise thee." **Thine own right hand can save thee.** If Job can do away with sin and

4. *The Interpolation concerning the Hippopotamus and the Crocodile,* 40 : 15–41 : 34

15. Behold now [1] behemoth,[2] which I made with thee;
He eateth grass as an ox.

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[1] m. That is, *the hippopotamus.*

[2] Gr. Sah. omit *which I made.*

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sinners, then God will praise him as a man able to save himself. The turn of the thought is unexpected; we should anticipate from the preceding argument that God would have said, "that thou art able to rule the world." In the last analysis, however, it was his own deliverance as an honest man in which Job was most deeply interested. The problems of the world engaged his thought only as they affected his own fortunes. The turn given this expression therefore exactly suits Job's case. Probably, too, the remark is ironical. If Job meted out punishment to the wicked so remorselessly, would he not be doing in this mixed world just the kind of injustice that he has accused God of doing to him? His assertions of purity have savored also of arrogance; to ruthlessly destroy others would but express and increase that arrogance. The irony is not, however, of a hard and unfeeling sort. Job's answer in ch. 42, which originally immediately followed this, shows that the influence of the presence of the Infinite had now had time to touch the springs of his being and bring him to a better frame of mind.

15. **Behemoth.** The word is the plural of the Hebrew word for "animal" or "cattle." The description which follows, however, shows that it is used here as a singular and as the proper name of some animal. The margin tells us that this animal is the hippopotamus and in this most interpreters agree. Some, however, claim that it is a purely mythological being like Rahab (see notes on 9 : 13; 26 : 12). It is true that in Enoch 60 : 7, 8 leviathan and behemoth have both become mythical monsters, but the definiteness of the description here and its applicability to the hippopotamus and the crocodile make it most probable that these actual animals are referred to. The whole section is, however, a later addition. It interrupts the thought of the poem, which has prepared the reader for Job's submission. If the passage were genuine it should have come in with the other description of animals in ch. 39. Moreover its poetry is distinctly inferior to that of the addresses of Jehovah. It was evidently added by some Jew who had lived in Egypt, where he had seen these

16. Lo now, his strength is in his loins,
And his force is in the muscles of his belly.
17. He moveth his tail like a cedar:
The sinews of his thighs are knit together.
18. His bones are *as* tubes of brass;
His [1] limbs are like bars of iron.
19. He is the chief of the ways of God:
[2] He *only* [3] that made him can make [4] his sword to approach *unto him.*
20. [5] Surely the mountains bring him forth food;
[6] Where all the beasts of the field [7] do play.
21. He lieth under the lotus trees,
In the covert of the reed, and the fen.

animals, and who thought that the argument for the great power of God as displayed in the animal world was not complete without a reference to the two most remarkable animals he had ever seen. **Which I made.** The line in the Hebrew is too long. We should omit these words with the Greek and Sahidic versions.

17. **His tail like a cedar.** Better "his tail is like cedar." Commentators have found in this a gross exaggeration. The tail of the hippopotamus is short and stumpy, and they have understood cedar as though it were a cedar tree. It can as well be a cedar log, however, and the poet is saying that the tail of the hippopotamus is like a cedar log, straight and strong.

19. **He only that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.** Neither the text nor the margin of RV gives an appropriate thought. The Hebrew text is clearly corrupt. As several scholars have seen, we should emend on the basis of the versions cited and read:

"He was made as ruler of his fellows."

20. **Surely the mountains bring him forth food.** Read with the versions cited, "When he goes to the high mountains." The hippopotamus is said to go to the hills when food along the river fails. **Where all the beasts of the field do play.** Again read with the versions, "He makes glad all the beasts of the field." The

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[1] m. Or, *ribs.* [2] m. Or, *He that made him hath furnished* him with *his sword.* [3] Gr. Sym. Sah. Eth. *he was made to be served.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *by his messengers.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *When he goes to the high mountains.* [6] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. omit *Where.* [7] Gr. Sah. Eth. *he makes glad.*

22. [1] The lotus trees cover him with their shadow;
The willows of the brook compass him about.
23. Behold, if a river [2] overflow, he trembleth not:
He is confident, though Jordan swell even to his mouth.
24. Shall any take him when he is on the watch,
Or pierce through his nose with a snare?
40. Canst thou draw out [3] leviathan with a fish hook?
Or [4] press down his tongue with a cord?

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[1] Aq. Theod. Syr. Hex. *Their shade covers him.* Sym. (Syr. Hex.) *They are overshadowed by the shade.* Syr. Vulg. Targ. Ar. *Under the* (or *its*) *shade he sleeps.* [2] m. Or, *be violent.* [3] m. That is, *the crocodile.* [4] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *bind his nose.*

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other animals are conceived to be glad that this monster is out of the way.

22. **The lotus trees cover him with their shadow.** Many modern interpreters have thought the text corrupt because the "lotus trees" are mentioned again. A glance at the readings of the versions cited above confirms this view and reveals the fact that none of the versions except the Greek and its followers read "lotus trees" in the verse. Probably we should read with the Syriac and kindred versions, "Under their shade he sleeps."

23. **Though Jordan swell.** Hippopotami are not found in the Jordan; some scholars would accordingly read here "Nile" instead — a change which would be very easy in the Hebrew. It may be, though, that we should, as some interpreters do, render "a Jordan" and regard the name as a designation of a swiftly flowing stream. On the whole, however, it is more probable that the reference is to the annual overflow of the Nile, and that "Nile" stood originally in the text, and that some devout scribe changed it to Jordan.

24. **Shall any take him when he is on the watch.** Literally, "Will one take him by the eyes?" *i.e.* Will one be bold enough to attack him in the eyes? **Pierce through his nose.** A reference to his broad, thick, impenetrable nose.

1. **Leviathan.** The margin tells us that the crocodile is intended, and so most interpreters agree. In Job 3:8; Isa. 27:1; and Enoch 60:7 the name Leviathan is used of a mythological, writhing, snake-like being, who was no doubt originally identical with Rahab or the primitive sea-monster Tiamat of Babylonian mythology. On Babylonian seals Tiamat is some-

2. Canst thou put [1] a rope into his nose?
Or pierce his jaw through with a [2] hook?
3. Will he make many supplications unto thee?
Or will he speak soft words unto thee?
4. Will he make a covenant with thee,
That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever?
5. Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?
Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?
6. Shall the bands *of fishermen* make traffic of him?
[3] Shall they part him among the merchants?

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[1] m. Heb. *a rope of rushes.*

[2] m. Or, *spike.*

[3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Shall the sons of the Canaanites part him?*

times pictured as a writhing serpent. Some scholars insist that the description in this chapter fits such a mythological monster far better than the crocodile, and it is true that vs. 19–21 below bear out this statement. The chapter as a whole is, however, appropriate to the crocodile, and in the verses mentioned the poet has been led by mythological reminiscences to color too highly his picture of a real animal.

2. **A rope into his nose.** Some suppose the reference to be to the insertion of a rope analogous to the cord which was inserted through the gills of fish after they were caught in order that they might be returned to the water and kept fresh. It is more probable that the reference is to a rope attached to a ring in the nose of an animal by which he could be led. **Pierce his jaw through with a hook.** Read "hook" with the text and not "spike" as the margin has it. The reference is to the insertion of hooks such as are pictured on Assyrian sculptures inserted into the lips or jaws of captives to which a cord for leading them could be attached. The jaw of the crocodile does not lend itself to such perforation.

3. **Will he make many supplications?** An ironical question. The crocodile does not supplicate; he fights.

4. **Take him for a servant.** That is, "Will he become one of thy domesticated animals?"

5. **Bind him for thy maidens.** That is, make a pet of him, as one would of a bird.

6. **Bands of fishermen.** The fishers' guilds. **Shall they part him among the merchants?** The versions cited by the trans-

7. Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons,
Or his head with fish spears?
8. Lay thine hand upon him;
Remember the battle, and do so no more.
9. Behold, [1] the hope of him is in vain:
[2] Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?
10. None is [3] so fierce that he dare stir him up:
Who then is he that can stand before [4] me?
11. [5] Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him?

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[1] 1 Heb. MS. *thy hope.* Syr. Ar. *thy foot.* [2] Sym. *But even God shall cast down the sight of him.* Syr. Ar. *But God shall destroy his rebellion.* [3] Syr. Ar. *so distant.* [4] 27 Heb. MSS. Targ. *him.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Has one opposed himself to me and been safe?*

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position of two Hebrew letters gained the reading, "Shall the sons of the Canaanites part him?" The meaning is the same as that of the Hebrew text, for the Canaanites were such traders that to the Hebrews "Canaanite" became synonymous with "merchant." This is the case in Hos. 12:8; Isa. 23:8; Zeph. 1:11; Ezek. 17:4; Pr. 31:24.

7. **Barbed irons . . . fish spears.** Harpoons were known to the ancients, but the hide of the crocodile was too tough to be penetrated. Herodotus, II, 70, describes how the crocodile was caught by baiting a large hook with a living pig.

8. **Remember the battle, and do so no more.** One encounter with such a beast is enough; one will not wish to repeat the experience.

9. **Behold, the hope of him.** Read with one Heb. MS. "thy hope," *i.e.* thy hope of taking him. The Syriac and Arabic versions support this reading, though in them "hope" was corrupted to "foot." **In vain.** The Hebrew has "is falsified." **Shall not one be cast down at the sight of him?** Symmachus and the Syriac had different readings, as noted above. They show us that probably the original reading of the Hebrew was, "Has not God hurled his terror abroad?" That is, made the terror inspired by the crocodile of wide extent.

10. **Before me.** Read with the Targum and 27 Heb. MSS., "before him."

11. **Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him?** This question as it stands conveys no clear meaning. We should

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.
12. [1] I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
[2] Nor his mighty strength, [3] nor his comely proportion.
13. Who can [4] strip off his outer garment?
Who shall come within his [5] double bridle?
14. Who can open the doors of his [6] face?
[7] Round about his teeth is terror.
15. *His* [8] strong scales are [9] *his* pride,
[10] Shut up together *as with* a close seal.
16. One is so near to another,

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[1] Syr. Ar. *I will not be silent as to his strength.* Targ. *I will not be silent concerning his falsity.* Vulg. *I will not spare him.*

[2] Syr. Ar. *And as to the mighty tendons.*

[3] Syr. Ar. omit *nor his comely proportion.*

[4] m. Heb. *uncover the face of his garment.*

[5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *his breastplate.*

[6] Syr. Ar. *mouth.*

[7] m. Or, *His teeth are terrible round about.*

[8] m. Or, *courses of scales.* Heb. *channels of shields.*

[9] Gr. OLat. Aq. Vulg. Sah. Eth. *his back.*

[10] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *Its ligament is a seal of stone.*

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probably read with the versions cited, "Has one opposed himself to me and been safe?" **Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.** If we follow the versions in the preceding line we should change one letter of the Hebrew here and read, "Under the whole heaven not one." When the two parts of the verse are read thus two interpretations are possible: (1) it may be considered an utterance of God, stating that God is stronger than Leviathan; or (2) it may be regarded as the boastings of a huntsman.

12. **I will not keep silence concerning his limbs.** The verse is inappropriate in a soliloquy of God, though perhaps it might not be on the lips of a hunter. The variations of the versions show that the text is corrupt. Probably we should emend with the Syriac and Arabic, so as to read,

"I will not keep silent concerning his strength,
Nor his mighty tendons, nor his warlike outfit."

The verse is then the poet's introduction to the following description.

13. **Double bridle.** Read with the versions cited, "his breastplate."

14. **His face.** Read with the versions cited, "his mouth."

15. **His strong scales are his pride.** Read with the versions cited, "His back is channels of shields" — a poetical description of scales. **Shut up together as with a close seal.** Read with the versions cited, "Its ligament is a seal of stone."

That [1] no air can come between them.
17. They are joined one to another;
They stick together, that they cannot be sundered.
18. His [2] neesings flash forth light,
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.
19. Out of his mouth go burning torches,
And sparks of fire [3] leap forth.
20. Out of his nostrils a smoke goeth,
As of a seething pot [4] and *burning* rushes.
21. His breath kindleth coals,
And a flame goeth forth from his mouth.
22. In his neck abideth strength,
And [5] terror danceth before him.
23. The flakes of his flesh are joined together:
They are firm upon him; they cannot be moved.
24. His heart is as firm as a stone;
[6] Yea, firm as the nether millstone.

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[1] Aq. Sym. *no space.* [2] Gr. Aq. Vulg. Targ. Sah. Eth. *sneezing.* [3] Syr. Vulg. Ar. *flame forth.* [4] Gr. Sah. Eth. *with a fire of coals.* Syr. Vulg. Ar. *that boils.* [5] Gr. Sah. Eth. *destruction runs before him.* [6] Gr. Sah. Eth. *And it stands.* Syr. Ar. *And strong.*

18. **His neesings flash forth light.** Read with the versions cited, "His sneezing flashes." A poetical description of how the spray from his nostrils flashes in the sunlight.

19. **Burning torches . . . sparks of fire.** In this and the two verses that follow there is some exaggeration, induced, perhaps, by the recollection of a description of a mythical monster.

20. **And burning rushes.** Perhaps we should read as the Greek does, "with a fire of coals," or as the Syriac does, "that boils."

21. **His breath kindleth coals.** Evidently an exaggeration due to mythological influence.

22. **Terror danceth.** The Hebrew has "faintness danceth." It is better to read with the versions cited, "destruction runs."

23. **The flakes of his flesh.** The parts beneath the neck and belly. In most animals these hang down soft and flexible, but in the crocodile they are hard and firm.

24. **Yea, firm as.** Even if we emend with the Greek or the Syriac, the thought remains the same. **Nether millstone.** It

25. When he raiseth himself up, the mighty are afraid:
By reason of consternation they are beside themselves.
26. [1] If one lay at him with the sword, it cannot avail;
Nor the spear, the dart, nor the [2] pointed shaft.
27. He counteth iron as straw,
And brass as rotten wood.
28. The [3] arrow cannot make him flee:
Slingstones are turned with him into stubble.
29. Clubs are counted [4] as stubble:
He laugheth at the rushing of the javelin.
30. His underparts are *like* sharp potsherds:
He spreadeth *as it were* a threshing wain upon the mire.
31. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot:
He maketh the sea like ointment.

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[1] 1 Heb. MS. Gr. Sym. Sah. Eth. *If the sword touch him.* [2] m. Or, *coat of mail.*
[3] m. Heb. *son of the bow.* [4] Gr. Aq. Sym. Theod. Eth. *like reeds.*

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was proverbially hard, as it had to bear all the wear and tear of the upper stone.

25. **The mighty.** Literally, "the gods." **By reason of consternation they.** Read with the versions cited, "The mighty ones." This makes good sense, if we translate "the gods" in the preceding line. In poetry such polytheistic language is possible even to a monotheist.

26. **If one lay at him with the sword.** Read with the versions, "If the sword touch him." **Pointed shaft.** The marginal reading, "coat of mail," is not suitable here.

29. **As stubble.** Read with the versions cited, "like reeds."

30. **His underparts are like sharp potsherds.** The scales of his belly are likened to sharp spikes, which leave a track in the mud as he passes over. Modern scholars differ as to whether this is or is not true, but if in this age of science there is doubt about it, too great exactness cannot be demanded of an ancient poet.

31. **Like ointment.** Beaten to a foam to mix the different ingredients.

32. He maketh a path to shine after him;
One would think the deep to be hoary.
33. Upon earth there is not his like,
That is made without fear.
34. He beholdeth every thing that is high:
He is king [1] over all the [2] sons of pride.

5. *Job's Final Reply*, 42:1–6

42. Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
2. I know that thou canst do all things,
And that [3] no purpose of thine can be restrained.
3. [4] Who is this that hideth counsel [5] without knowledge?
Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not,

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[1] Gr. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. and perhaps Targ. *over all creeping things.* [2] m. See 28:8. [3] Gr. Sah. Eth. *nothing is impossible for thee.* [4] m. See 38:2. [5] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Eth. Ar. add *with words.*

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32. **A path to shine after him.** As in the wake of a modern steamship.

34. **He beholdeth everything that is high.** This gives in the context a very unsatisfactory meaning. It is better to make two slight changes in the Hebrew, as most modern scholars do, and translate,

"Every one that is high feareth him."

All the sons of pride. Read with the versions, "over all creeping things." He is the king of reptiles as the lion is king of beasts.

1. **Then Job answered the Lord and said.** This verse should follow immediately upon 40:15. The interpolations concerning the hippopotamus and crocodile have now separated Job's final reply from Jehovah's last address.

2. **No purpose of thine can be restrained.** Read with the versions cited, "nothing is impossible for thee."

3. **Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge?** These words are a gloss which has crept in here from 38:2. Probably some one wrote them on the margin as an appropriate comment, and from that they were copied into the text. **Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not.** The vision of

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
4. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak;
[1] I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
5. I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;
But now mine eye seeth thee,
6. Wherefore [2] I abhor *myself*, and repent
In dust and ashes.

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[1] m. See 38:2; 40:7.

[2] Syr. Ar. *I am silent.* m. Or, *loathe* my words.

God had made Job conscious of the limitation both of his intelligence and power. He confesses now that he has acted unadvisedly. The line should follow immediately on v. 2.

4. **Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak.** This verse is a gloss and should be removed. The second line of it is quoted from 38: 3, and the first line was apparently composed to make the second one fit. The whole is inappropriate on the lips of Job and mars his beautiful submission. Some have supposed that the words are spoken by Jehovah, who interrupted Job, but that, too, is inappropriate and would mar the beauty and dignity of the conclusion.

5. **Heard of thee . . . seeth thee.** These words give us the climax of the whole book. Job's previous knowledge of God had been based on the experiences and traditions of other people; the vision of God had given him a first-hand experience. From his second-hand knowledge he had reasoned erroneously and foolishly; his first-hand experience had given him a clearer vision which at once humbled, purified, and exalted him.

6. **Wherefore I abhor myself.** One of the lines of the verse is too short. It is probable, as the margin of RV suggests, that something has fallen out of the text. Probably we should read:

"Wherefore I abhor my words,
And repent in dust and ashes."

The vision of God had brought Job to penitence and reconciliation with his Creator and with life. The poet purposely represented Jehovah as presenting no real answer to Job's problems. Like the three friends, only in a more majestic and powerful way, Jehovah presents the marvels of God's power, the insignificance of man, and the inability of a mortal either to understand or to order the mysteries of life. Not one of God's passionate inquiries has been answered, and yet Job is satisfied. The vision of God has convinced him that, though he cannot understand, there is One who can. It has taught him to trust his life, his

VI. The Epilogue, 42:7–17

7. And it was so that after the Lord had spoken [1] these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, [2] My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken [3] of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job
8. hath. Now therefore, take unto you seven bullocks

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[1] Gr. Sah. *all these words.* [2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Thou hast sinned.* [3] Gr. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *before me.*

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fortunes, his fate to that One, and to go peacefully forward, happy in the life of trust and communion with God.

It is thus that this greatest of Hebrew poets — sage though he was — brings out with dramatic force the great lesson that the final solution of life's riddle can never be intellectual, but must always be religious. After the intellect has done its utmost, it is baffled; the only solution is in the mystic experience which brings one face to face with God and teaches one to trust the infinite Intelligence and infinite Goodness.

In the form in which the poet has cast his work he also portrays both the function and the limits of reason in religion. Job forever exploded the unreal orthodoxy of his day, viz. the doctrine that goodness brings outward prosperity and that sin brings outward misfortune. His keen intellect swept away doctrines which had become inadequate explanations of the experiences of life. The function of reason, he thus taught, is to keep theology in touch with reality as in life's progress reality is more clearly seen. In the artistically beautiful and religiously sublime conclusion to which he brings the discussion in vs. 5, 6 he shows that reason is inadequate to explain the world and life. Here religion is indispensable. Another great lesson which he taught is that religion, to be of value, must rest, not on faith in the experience of some one else, but upon a first-hand knowledge of God. Traditional religion is in life's tragic moments a broken reed on which to lean.

7. **These words.** Perhaps with the versions cited we should read, "all these words." **My wrath is kindled against thee.** Possibly here the versions quoted are right in reading, "thou hast sinned." **Not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath.** For "of me" read with the versions, "before me."

It is clear that these words were not written to follow the poem, but that they belong to the old story that the poet borrowed

and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept, that I deal not with you after your folly; for ye have not spoken[1] of me the thing that is right, as my servant
9. Job hath. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the [2] Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: and the
10. LORD accepted Job. And the LORD [3] turned the

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. omit *of me*. Syr. Ar. *before me*.
[2] Gr. Sah. Eth. *Minæan*.
[3] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *increased Job*.

for the setting of his great argument. A different discussion must once have preceded them — one in which, perhaps, the friends had voiced sentiments similar to those expressed by Job's wife in 2:9 and Job had maintained throughout the tone of 1:21 and 2:10. Their literal application to the preceding discussion is inappropriate, because the friends have spoken most piously of God, while Job's denunciations of God's providence have not only been severe, but God has himself declared (38:2) that Job has "darkened counsel by words without knowledge." Probably the poet retained them, however, as a conclusion to his treatment of the subject because, while not literally applicable, they were in principle appropriate. In his view Job's manly criticism of God and life, together with his equally manly repentance, — a course which made his religion real, — merited the divine approval much more than the way in which the friends had maintained by shallow argument, for the sake of saving themselves, a theology that had become obsolete. The poet anticipated this in what he put into the mouth of Job in 13:7, 8.

8. **A burnt offering.** As in 1:5. The story originated in a period when it was still thought that sacrifice atoned for sin. Against this view many prophets and psalmists protested, cf. Amos 5:21, 25; Isa. 1:11–14; Ps. 50. **Shall pray for you.** The value of intercessory prayer was early appreciated, cf. Abraham's intercession for Sodom, Gen. 18:22–23 — a passage written by J^2. Ezekiel, however, declares (Eze. 14:14) that neither Noah, Daniel, nor Job could deliver in this way any but themselves.

10. **Turned the captivity.** A figurative expression for "brought back prosperity." Probably the versions which read

captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: and the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.
11. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and [1] did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him concerning all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a [2] piece of
12. money, and every one a ring of gold. So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: and he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand
13. she-asses. He had also [3] seven sons and three daugh-
14. ters. And he called the name of the first, [4] Jemimah; and the name of the second, Keziah; and the name

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[1] Gr. OLat. Sah. Eth. *ate and drank.* [2] Gr. OLat. Sah. *a lamb.* m. Heb. *kesitah.*
[3] Targ. *fourteen.* [4] Gr. OLat. Syr. Sah. Ar. Eth. *Yomah.*

"made Job great" have preserved the original reading. "Turned the captivity" is an expression which was probably substituted after the Babylonian exile. **When he prayed for his friends.** The story teaches, perhaps unconsciously, that personal prosperity comes through self-forgetfulness. "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it," Matt. 10: 39. **Twice as much.** This story is based on the principle which the poet has throughout combated, viz. that righteousness brings earthly prosperity.

11. **Piece of money.** Margin, "kesitah" — a monetary designation of the early time, the value of which is unknown, cf. Gen. 33: 19; Josh. 24: 32.

13. **Seven sons.** The Targum, as noted above, reads fourteen sons, making the number of sons double (cf. 1: 2) as well as the other possessions, but even the Targum keeps the number of daughters as three. All the other versions read "seven sons" here, and it is probable that the epilogue did not double the number of the children.

14. **Jemimah.** The name apparently means "dove." The versions mistook it for "Yomah," which means "day." **Keziah.** The name means "cassia" and suggests "fra-

15. of the third, Keren-happuch. And in all the land were
no women found so fair as the daughters of Job:
and their father gave them inheritance among their
16. brethren. And after this Job lived an hundred and
[1] forty years, [2] and saw his sons, and his sons' sons,

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[1] Gr. Sah. Eth. *seventy.* [2] Gr. Ar. add *and all the days of Job were two hundred and forty years.* Some Gr. MSS. OLat. Sah. Eth. add *and all the days of Job were two hundred and forty-eight years.*

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grance." **Keren-happuch.** The name signifies "horn of antimony," *i.e.* "beautifier," since antimony was used by women to blacken the eyes and so, to Oriental taste, to make them more beautiful.

15. **Inheritance among their brethren.** This was unusual generosity. Hebrew law allowed daughters to inherit when there were no sons (see Num. 27: 1–11), but to give them an inheritance with sons was unusual.

16. **An hundred and forty years.** This supposes that he was seventy years old at the time of his trial, and that he lived twice as long as before, just as he had twice as many possessions as before. The versions have exaggerated the number.

17. **So Job died.** With the brief statement of this verse the story ended. Reverent imaginations, however, continued to work upon it. The Greek, Old Latin, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions add, "But it is written that he shall be raised with those whom the Lord shall raise up."

Several of the versions have also the following statement, which originated in Syria, is preserved in its shorter form in the Arabic version, and was afterward added with expansions to the Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic. The statement is, according to the Arabic:

"And Job dwelt in the land of Uz on the border of Edom and Arabia and was before called Jobab. And he took a foreign wife and there was born to him a son whose name was Anun. And Job was the son of Zara, the grandson of Esau; and his mother was from Bosrah; and he was the sixth from Abraham. And of the kings who ruled in Edom who were over this land, he was before Balak the son of Beor. And the name of the city of this man was Danaba. And after him, Jobab; he is the one who is called Job. And afterward Job also was the name of him who was prince of the land of Teman; and after him, the son of Barak. This is the one who uttered the curse and fled to Midian in the plain of Moab. And the name of his city was Gātham. And

17. *even* four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.

---

as to the friends of Job who came, Eliphaz of the sons of Esau was king of the Temanites."

The Greek, Sahidic, and Ethiopic versions differ from this: (1) in stating that it was copied from a Syrian book; (2) in making Job the fifth from Abraham instead of the sixth; and (3) in adding that Bildad was Tyrant of the Shuhites, and Zophar, king of the Minæans. The addition in either form has no historical value. It but serves to show that the story of Job excited continued interest, and that popular tradition busied itself in filling out details concerning him. It has, however, an interesting bearing upon the growth of the legend of Job; see notes on 1 : 1; 2 : 11; and Introduction, p. 6.

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